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Telling presences: narrating divine epiphany
in Homer and beyond

Alexander David Stevens
Pembroke College



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Alexander Stevens

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This thesis argues that ancient Greek narratives of encounter between gods and mortals cannot be understood simply in terms of constellations of recurrent descriptive features or in terms of the iterability of type-scene or ritual. Divine epiphanies are moments of disruption or anti-structure which provoke strategic, structuring responses, not least in narrative and ritual. But these responses do not subsume the potential that remains at the intersection between gods and mortals. Contestation over power, authority and legitimacy is constitutive of epiphany.

In the first section I examine problems caused by scholarly concern for 'authentic experience' in treating epiphany-accounts in general and Homeric epic in particular. I propose an alternative focus on how sense, both as perception and as significance, is actively produced in such contexts: narrativisation and ritualisation offer experiences-in-themselves in which people participate to make sense and significance in the world. The cultural currency of such narratives depends not on their relation to religious experiences or religious belief as such, but on the ways that such narratives engage their audiences in exploring the difference of gods from mortals and the ramifications of this difference for human existence in the world.

In the second section I consider a succession of moments in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, first to destabilise the notion of divine epiphany as a self-evident category or paradigm, second to explore the vital importance of three questions: what constitutes divine presence and absence, how they are manifested, and how they might or might not be recognised. The expression of divine presence in figurative terms in Homer does not reflect a metaphorisation of divine power, but is constitutive of the problematic play of divine presence and mortal recognition. The consequences of recognising or failing to recognise this play of presence and absence can be profound. Even when contemplating the 'body' of the gods, problems of perception and point-of-view are operative. Viewing divine epiphany as an interplay of presence and perception points to the importance of the specific constituting frames of presence and absence.

Contestation and realisation of authority and legitimacy are crucial concomitants. I explore the ends of the *Odyssey* and *Iliad* in terms of the authority of gods to end our narratives and the potential for mortals to generate specifically human meanings in and around these ends.

In my conclusion I look beyond Homer briefly to consider the ongoing place of narratives of divine epiphany in Greek cultural contexts. How significance is generated in relation to the presence and absence of the gods remains a central question, and the disruptive tropes of epiphany play a crucial role.

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Preface

I declare that this dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration.

That said, *this* thesis would not have been written without the questions and encouragement of several people in particular: Simon Goldhill, whose insistence that I think backwards as well as forwards has been an education in the best sense; Pat Easterling, whose concern for detail, sensitivity and propriety was a gentle spur; and Kevin Lee, whose suggestion started this all off—his untimely death has robbed Australian Classics of an immensely humane and dignified advocate, and I wish I could still thank him face-to-face. I dedicate this work to his memory.

Many others have helped, not least the graduate community of the Faculty of Classics, the staff of the Classics Faculty Library, and several members of the Faculty who have been generous with their time. In preparing for submission, the patient reading of Liz Irwin, Ashley Clements, Emily Greenwood, Jason König, Elton Barker, Cam Grey and Polly Low has been invaluable. Financial support from the Association of Commonwealth Universities, the British Council, the Faculty of Classics and Pembroke College has made it possible. Last but always first, to Geraldine and my family, my love.

This dissertation does not exceed 80 000 words in length, excluding the bibliography.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A. Steiner', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Texts and abbreviations

The *Iliad* is cited from M. L. West (ed.) (1998-2000). The *Odyssey* and Homeric Hymns are cited from Allen (ed.) ([1908] 1917) and Allen (ed.) (1912). Editions of other authors are footnoted. Iota subscript is changed to plain iota throughout.

The following abbreviations are used in the footnotes.

Dindorf	W. Dindorf (ed.) (1855), <i>Scholia Graeca in Homeri Odysseam</i> , 2 vols., Oxford.
D-K	H. Diels and W. Kranz (edd.) (1951), <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> , 6th ed., Berlin.
Erbse	H. Erbse (ed.) (1969-1988), <i>Scholia Graeca in Homeri Odysseam</i> , 5 vols., Berlin.
IG	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i> .
MW	R. Merkelbach and M. L. West (edd.) (1990), <i>Hesiodi: Fragmenta selecta</i> , 3rd edition, Oxford [with F. Solmsen (ed.) (1983), <i>Hesiodi Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum</i> , 2nd ed., Oxford].
LfrgE	B. Snell and H. Erbse (edd.) (1971-), <i>Lexicon des frühgriechischen Epos</i> , Göttingen.
LSCG	F. Sokolowski (ed.) (1969), <i>Lois sacrées des cités grecques</i> , Paris.
LSCGS	F. Sokolowski (ed.) (1962), <i>Lois sacrées des cités grecques: supplément</i> , Paris.
LSJ	H. Liddell, R. Scott, H. Jones et al. (edd.) (1940), <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> , 9th ed., Oxford.
SIG	W. Dittenberger (ed.) (1915-1924), <i>Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum</i> , 3rd ed., Leipzig.
Stallbaum	G. Stallbaum (ed.) (1825-1826), <i>Eustathii Commentarii ad Homeri Odysseam</i> , 2 vols., Leipzig.
van der Valk	M. van der Valk (ed.) (1971-1987), <i>Eustathii Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem Pertinentes</i> , 4 vols., Leiden.

Ἀσπιδοφόρος ὁ ἥλιος ἀνέβαινε πολεμώντας
 κι' ἀπὸ τὸ βάθος τῆς σπηλιᾶς μιὰ νυχτερίδα τρομαγμένη
 χτύπησε πάνω στὸ φῶς σὰν τὴ σαίτα πάνω στὸ σκουτάρι·
 «Ἀσίνην τε Ἀσίνην τε...». Νά 'ταν αὐτὴ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς Ἀσίνης
 ποὺ τὸν γυρεύουμε τόσο προσεχτικὰ σὲ τούτη τὴν ἀκρόπολη
 γγίζοντας κάποτε μὲ τὰ δάχτυλά μας τὴν ἀφή του πάνω στὶς πέτρες.

Shieldbearer, the sun climbed warring,
 and from the depths of the cave a startled bat
 hit the light as an arrow hits a shield:
 "Ἀσίνην τε Ἀσίνην τε..." Would that it were the king of Asine
 we've been searching for so carefully on this acropolis
 sometimes touching with our fingers his touch upon the stones.

Seferis, *The King of Asine*.

1. Are we experienced?

The problems of reading divine epiphany

Have you ever been experienced? ... Well, I have.

Jimi Hendrix, *Are You Experienced?*

That which has been rent asunder should be reunited—narratives of interactions between ordinary mortals and extraordinary beings, and the traditions of the latter, should be taken as an integral part of the way the Greeks made sense of the anomic, related to those things they considered apart from ordinary reality, and legitimated their own secular arrangements.

C. Robert Phillips, III, 'Misconceptualizing Classical Mythology'

Gods in the world?

There is a well-known incident early in the *Odyssey* where Athene has been accompanying Telemakhos in the guise of Mentor but suddenly departs φήνηι εἰδομένη, 'like a lammergeyer'.¹ In this bizarre moment—θάμβος δ' ἔλε πάντας Ἀχαιοῦς—both the immediate perceptions of the characters present at the scene and the privileged perspective of the audience on the presence of Athene are disrupted by the form in which she departs: her 'likeness' blurs the boundaries of metaphor and actuality, and audience and characters alike are left to wonder just what they should have seen in the departure of the goddess. Questions arise. How are we to read such a narrative of divine (dis)appearance? What are

¹ *Od.* 3.371-373. For further discussion, see below, pp. 138-146.



the boundaries of being and seeming in relation to the presence of gods? More generally, how is the distinction between divine presence and absence to be realised? And what are the consequences for mortals of the divine potential to subvert the basic order of human being-in-the-world in such a way? In short, what could it mean for gods to become manifest in the sensory world of humans? In fact, much of the rest of *Odyssey* 3 is taken up with Nestor's exemplary demonstration of the reciprocal opportunities that such a moment of disruption offers, through processes of narrative and ritual in which Nestor explores and constructs avenues of meaning within which Athene's disruptive departure takes fuller shape: the disruptive effects of Athene's departure and the generation of significance here go hand in hand. This dynamic of structure and anti-structure is the central problem that this thesis seeks to explore, in particular the connection, but *not* identification, of epiphany with narrative and ritual.

More questions are prompted by a story about a certain Sostrata of Pherai that was inscribed on one of the stelai located in the sanctuary of Asklepios at Epidauros:²

Σωστράτα Φεραί[α παρ]εκύησε.³ αἵ[ν]τα ἐμ παντὶ ἐοῦσα φοράδαν εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν ἀφικομένα ἐνε[κ]άθευδε. ὥς δὲ οὐθὲν ἐνύπνιον ἐναργ[έ]ς ἐώρη, πάλιν οὔκαδε ἀπεκομίζ[ε]το. μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο συμβολῆσαί τις περὶ Κόρνους αὐτῇ καὶ τοῖς ἐπομένοις ἔδοξε τὰν ὄψιν εὐπρεπῆς ἀνὴρ, ὃς πυθόμενος παρ' αὐτῶν τῆς δυσπραξίας τὰς αὐτῶν ἐκελήσατο θέμεν τὰν κλῖναν, ἐφ' ἧς τὰν Σωστράταν ἔφερον. ἔπειτα τὰγ κοίλιαν αὐτᾶς ἀνσχίσας ἔξαιρεῖ πληθὺς ζῴων πάν[μ]πολυ, [δύ]ε ποδανιπτήρας· συνράψας δὲ τᾶν γλαστέρα καὶ ποήσας ὑγιῇ τὰν γυναῖκα τὰν τε παρουσίαν τὰν αὐτοῦ παρενεφάνιξε ὁ Ἀσκληπιὸς καὶ ἱάτρα ἐκέλετο ἀπ[ο]πέμπειν εἰς Ἐπίδαυρον.]

Unusually, what this story tells is the initial failure of Sostrata's incubation in the sanctuary of Asklepios itself. But a subsequent encounter on the road home leads to roadside surgery, and this seemingly chance encounter turns out to be an appearance of Asklepios: τὰν τε παρουσίαν τὰν αὐτοῦ παρενεφάνιξε ὁ Ἀσκληπιὸς.⁴ In this way, Sostrata's story tells of the transition from divine absence to divine presence that opens up the problematic of reading divine epiphany still further. In particular, this alternative instance of Asklepios's healing intervention implicitly fractures the ritual model of divine-mortal

² IG IV², 1, 122.26-35; no. 25 in the sequence of *iamata* preserved as IG IV², 1, 121-124. Text as in LiDonnici (ed.) (1995), 104. Date: late 4th cent. BCE. For further discussion, see below, pp. 169-172.

³ Note Scullion (2001), 119-120: in place of Φεραί[α παρ]εκύησε, read Φεραί[τις] ἐκύησε.

⁴ Compare Herzog (1931), 78-79: 'Da es keine Inkubationsheilung unter Kontrolle des Hieron ist, sondern eine freie Epiphanie.

contact through dream encounters that is the central practice in the Epidaurian sanctuary: epiphany here transcends the ritual frame. Yet conversely, the story also sets up an authoritative relation between the god's appearance and the more accessible ritual environment of his sanctuary, through the god's demand that his epiphanic performance be integrated within the familiar ritual frame when he orders offerings sent to Epidauros. In this way Asklepios's presence subverts the conventional practices of his cult even as it functions as guaranteed demonstration of the effectiveness of this same cult. As such, the full import of this story of divine appearance and ministration depends upon the initial unsettling absence of the god from the very frame designed to facilitate the encounter. We must ask: how is it that both divine presence and divine absence can be central to the generation of authority in such an encounter? Should we situate ritual before or after epiphany? Can there then be a grammar of epiphany? What is the significance of narrative like this in the contexts of ritual activity? Setting this story side-by-side with Athene's appearance in the *Odyssey* highlights the spread of the problematic of reading divine epiphany across the range of narrative as 'literature' to narrative in the contexts of ritual as 'actually practiced'.

Questions such as these point to a range of problems in reading the appearances and disappearances of gods. What is at stake are basic aspects of how humans understand themselves and their activities in relation to the world, and thus, more specifically, within the frameworks of value that order that world. This thesis will consider how narrative accounts of the modalities of divine presence are deeply implicated in how people situate themselves in relation to the worlds in which divine presence is to operate. Above all, the play of divine presence and absence raises questions about how power and potentiality are constituted in these worlds. 'Divine epiphanies' have consequences for the formulation of statements about power, knowledge and existence—especially insofar as these are conceived in terms at once dependent upon and yet radically distinct from those in which humans characterise their own nature and capabilities.

In the present study, it is a basic contention that stories and ideas about the play of divine presence and absence in and around the perceptual field of mortals offer explorations of the possible co-implication of humans and superhuman agents in the world—where the world is understood in its cosmic,

ordering sense. Such narrations and explorations are always value-laden.⁵ Stories and ideas of this sort tend to be called 'religious' in modern Western contexts, but, in view of the potential consequences that such stories and ideas entail for the worlds in which people dwell, it is an unsurprising truism that this 'religion' means many things. Close delimitation proves difficult: dispute over the definition of religion is a frequent cause for dissension among those who claim to be studying it.⁶ The ongoing prominence of religion and religious practices as cultural and geopolitical forces of the utmost significance remains a profound challenge, especially since this significance suggests the impossibility of circumscribing religion's scope even in this modern age. Consider an example relevant to a recent bloody European conflict:⁷

In Bosnia-Herzegovina ... the Virgin appeared in 1981, at Medjugorje, a Croatian-speaking village of 250 families. Since then more than twenty million pilgrims have visited it, despite the land mines and the sniper fire, and it has been given credit by no less an authority on such matters than the [former] president of Croatia, Franjo Tudjman, for "the reawakening of the Croatian nation."

The prominence of religion in the political culture of Croatia reflects many factors, but the key role of this narrative of divine presence in the 'reawakening' of a nation is made possible not least because religion is closely implicated in the processes by which we articulate value and order in our worlds.⁸ To identify the possibility of powers beyond those we claim for

⁵ Compare Lincoln (1999), 146-147, on the (undeveloped) insight of Durkheim and Mauss ([1901-1902] 1963), 77-78, that myth offers taxonomy (thus hierarchy, ideology) in narrative form. For the omnipresence of narrative, see e.g. Abbott (2002), 1-11; Prickett (2002); on narrative and religion, see esp. Flood (1999).

⁶ For ancient religion, see now Bremmer (1998). On the 'problem of definition', see J. Z. Smith (1982), esp. x-xi; Saler (1993); McCutcheon (1995); Idinopoulos and Wilson (edd.) (1998); J. Z. Smith (1998); Flood (1999), 42-64; Platvoet and Moledijk (edd.) (1999). For a survey of the formal types of definition applied, see B. C. Wilson (1998). Note Charlesworth (1997), 3: 'We are *locating* the concepts rather than *defining* them.'

⁷ Pelikan (1996), 3. The Catholic Church remains officially cautious about these apparitions; see e.g. the letter of Archbishop Tarcisio Bertone, dated 23 March 1996, as displayed at <<http://www.medjugorje.org/church2.htm>> [last accessed 5 June 2002], a website devoted to the promotion of pilgrimage to Medjugorje and a campaign for official recognition. Medjugorje is a site of contestation between the Vatican (Bertone is Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Vatican body responsible for doctrinal orthodoxy, formerly called the Holy Office, i.e. the Sanctum Officium Inquisitionis), the local diocese, the Franciscan order and the laity. See Bax (1995) for what is at stake, not least power and influence in local communities but also the economic and spiritual concomitants of the pilgrimage market; compare also <<http://www.medjugorje.org/mediv1.htm>> [last accessed 5 June 2002].

⁸ See esp. Asad (1993), 36-37: 'The argument that a particular disposition is religious partly because it occupies a conceptual place within a cosmic framework appears plausible, but only because it presupposes a question that must be made explicit: how do authorizing processes represent practices, utterances, or dispositions so that they can be

ourselves is also to identify ourselves, our strengths and our weaknesses (our fears), in terms that transcend any boundaries between the personal and the political.⁹ What is said about the one profoundly implicates the other.

Pragmatically speaking, religion reflects and impacts upon many aspects of human activity.¹⁰ In this respect, it is relevant that Greek does not speak of 'religion' as such with some equivalent compendium term, at least in the archaic and classical periods, but only of more particular activities and qualities which we subsequently identify as religious.¹¹ One recent approach concurs with this Greek particularisation in stressing that religion is not a 'unitary cognitive phenomenon', but is composed of various 'repertoires of representations' which extend into non-religious contexts.¹² As such religion has ramifications. The uncertain breadth and depth of the term underlines the consequences implicit in choices about what we intend to study religion *as*.¹³ Perspectives multiply across the fields of cultural and social specialisations: religions as mystic experience, as representations of society, as complex consequences of individual psychological development, as historical realisations of the nexus between institutions of authority and the processes of economics and politics, as manifestations in the world of a 'sacred' theological truth, as symbolic cultural systems, as cultural viruses, as sociological reward systems, and so on.¹⁴ Such choices, for whatever reasons they are made, significantly transform the studies of religion that result. Processes of selection are in themselves unavoidable and are in one sense desirable in providing a manageable corpus of data, but they tend to polarise the conceptual field of religion in potentially obscuring ways.

A prominent paradigm in the study of Greek religion builds on just such a basis: 'Ritual and myth are the two forms in which Greek religion presents

discursively related to general (cosmic) ideas of order? In short, the question pertains to the authorizing process by which "religion" is created.'

⁹ For how religions 'cluster around particular compounds of limitation', e.g. death, see Bowker (1973), 64.

¹⁰ It is in relation to its pragmatic contexts that the usefulness of the term 'religion' is defended, on a level with 'art', 'politics' and the like: see e.g. Strenski (1998); Flood (1999), 47-49.

¹¹ See Rudhardt ([1958] 1992), 11-12; Burkert (1985), 271.

¹² See Boyer (1999).

¹³ For this question, see esp. Saler (1993); S. Gill (1998b).

¹⁴ Of course, this is in no way exhaustive; I nominate some influential contributions from varying perspectives: Schleiermacher ([1799] 1996); W. James (1902); Weber ([1922] 1965), (1948), 267-359; Durkheim ([1912] 1995); Freud ([1913] 1955), ([1927] 1961), ([1930] 1961); R. Otto ([1917] 1950); Eliade ([1957] 1959); Geertz (1966); E. O. Wilson (1978); Dawkins ([1979] 1986); Stark and Bainbridge (1987).

itself to the historian of religion.¹⁵ Between these two more or less loosely defined aspects of the putative entity, Greek religion, one might suppose a degree of equality, as two sides of the same coin.¹⁶ In practice, this is not the case. Indeed, divisions between ritual and myth, and all that such divisions might be held to imply about (Greek) religion as a whole, have been prominent battlegrounds in the field over the last century or so, usually formulated in terms of the priority of one over the other.¹⁷ It is ritual which tends now to be presented as the primary, authoritative—and hence the properly ‘religious’—manifestation of Greek religious activity.¹⁸ Accordingly the ritual activities of concrete social entities are held to be the primary part of real religion.¹⁹ Myth is reduced to the status of elaboration.²⁰ Religion is thus physically, as much as conceptually, located in and around social groups or institutions, among which the *polis* is fundamental, on a Durkheimian basis.²¹ ‘Experience’ in the form of cultic activity, and the explicit or implicit belief which is held to lie behind it, becomes the major focus in the study of religion, and any associated discourse is evaluated as religious mostly on the basis of its proximity to such cultic experience. Fundamental here is a distinction between events, ‘what actually happens’, and discursive representations, ‘how things are told’ and thus transformed and *misrepresented*. This distinction becomes a major conceptual dichotomy in the study of ancient religion.

¹⁵ Burkert (1985), 8.

¹⁶ On the terms and their use, see Calame (1991); Versnel (1993), 15-88; Calame (1997).

¹⁷ See esp. Versnel (1993), 15-88; also J. Z. Smith (1987), 101-103.

¹⁸ As noted by Scullion (1994), 76. For illustration, see e.g. Burkert ([1972] 1983), xv, 29-34; Burkert (1985), 8-9: ‘ritual establishes and secures the solidarity of the closed group ... the truth of a myth is never guaranteed and does not have to be believed ... the importance of the myths of the gods lies in their connection with the sacred rituals for which they frequently provide a reason’; 54: ‘An insight which came to be generally acknowledged in the study of religion towards the end of last century is that rituals are more important and more instructive for the understanding of ancient religions than are changeable myths’; on 54-55, Burkert lays out a psychological conception of the workings of religion centred around ‘sacred ritual’ in terms that are similar to Otto ([1917] 1950). For this type of formulation as a nineteenth century legacy, see Bremmer (1998), 13-14; Calame (1990), 21-22. Bremmer (1998), 16-17, 23, comments on the evident influence of Robertson-Smith on Burkert and compares Robertson-Smith (1889), 19: ‘So far as myths consist of explanations of ritual, their value is altogether secondary’.

¹⁹ For what ‘ritual’ can mean in classics, see esp. I. Morris (1993).

²⁰ There have been important counters to this prioritisation: see Gould (1985) and Easterling (1985), who stress above all the multiplicity of the entity ‘Greek religion’. For a critique of the conceptualisation of myth as ‘dramatic embroidery’ on history, see Sourvinou-Inwood (1991), 244-246. See also Calame (1990), esp. 23-24; Buxton (1994); Sourvinou-Inwood (1995); Feeney (1998); and compare Scullion (1994), 118-119: ‘In the study of human culture much of what is most essential and distinctive in any individual or group is directly accessible only in the products of their imagination’.

²¹ See Parker (1996), 1. For the *polis* in Greek religion, see esp. Connor (1988); Davies (1988), 368-388; Sourvinou-Inwood (1988); Sourvinou-Inwood (1990); Aleshire (1994).

Now this split between actual events or practices and the discourses associated with them may not be so much of a methodological hurdle in the historically framed study of religious institutions qua institutions. But this strategy may not be so useful in the present context, where it is at least a pervasive complication—and perhaps a telling pointer—that instances of divine epiphany in archaic and classical Greek contexts come to us in narrative guises, be they historical, epic, dramatic, epigraphic, pictorial, whose form complicates any access to ‘actual events’.²² This present study is focused on textual narratives, and particularly the Homeric epics, which feature generic allegiances quite distinct from any that might be considered proper to an objectivising observation of instances of divine appearances to mortals or, indeed, proper to the direct testimony of participants in such an event.²³ From the outset the forms in which such divine appearances come to us are not framed so as to represent the ‘experience’ as such but instead to tell a story about divine appearance in a wider context, and thus to explain events, to find meaning, to locate this meaning in time and space, to give names to gods and to mortal outcomes, to uncover antecedents, to advertise responses, and in general to manage the aftermath of a moment of particular intensity, provocation and disruption. This framing reflects the place of religion in the social realm of language, intersubjectivity and culture. So how are we to respond to such narratives of gods in the world?



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- 22 Even visual media like vase-painting do not present ‘actual events’: on religious experience and art, see Carpenter (1997), 70-79. Compare a related issue, namely the reading of archaic art as ‘experience’ of Homer, see Lowenstam (1997); Snodgrass (1998). On visual narratives more generally, see Stewart (1987); and compare Goethe’s observation, ‘man sollte sich nicht etwa bey dem Bild denken, sondern man sollte das Bild denken und in demselben alles sehen’ as quoted and discussed by Snodgrass (1982), 3-5.
- 23 Supposing for the sake of argument that such forms present ‘unmediated’ experience; the issue is often left unconsidered, as e.g. by Franks Davis (1989), 30-32: ‘Mystics and ordinary believers from non-Christian religious traditions have generally been reluctant to give the world autobiographical accounts of their experiences, and as a result, pure, straightforward auto-descriptions are rare’. For this complaint in a Greek context, see Mikalson (1983), 4. Contrast Watts and Williams (1988), 18-23, esp. 23: ‘What is particularly interesting is exactly how religious people move from raw experience itself to a religious articulation of that experience’. A better formulation again avoids the dichotomy between ‘raw experience’ and its ‘articulation’ by recognising, with Bourdieu (1977), that cognition is already a ‘social activity’, grounded in the instantiation of *habitus* in practice: see Ingold (2000), 157-171, esp. 162-163.

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‘Religious experience’?

A typical strategy in reading narratives of divine appearance has been to focus upon the status—which is to say, the *authority*—of narrative as a document of ‘religious experience’.²⁴ Consider a fascinating example of this search for experience from the broader study of Greek religion. The *Periegesis* of Pausanias has been, since the work of Harrison, Frazer and Farnell, a central evidential source for Greek religious activity, and thus for Greek religious belief: ‘[w]hat we think about Pausanias affects what we think about everything else to do with Ancient Greece’.²⁵ Pausanias’s apparently guileless descriptive work has functioned, despite occasional gestures at potential problems, both as material and model for the historian of Greek religion in giving a largely static and institutional account biased toward the classical period.²⁶ Significantly, its authority in this respect depends very much on its apparent directness as a record of experience: as Alcock puts it, ‘the narrative of the journey is presented experientially, very much from Pausanias’s personal vantage point, with the reader told what they would “see” if they were present to look for themselves’.²⁷ This experiential account extends into first-person religious experiences, as when Pausanias attends the oracle of Trophonios at Lebadea, or relates the fact of his initiation at Eleusis and the dream which has stopped him from describing the Eleusinium.²⁸ Here then is a narrative which apparently

²⁴ Conversely, for authority understood as an *effect*, not a property, see Lincoln (1994).

²⁵ Thus Henderson (2001), 222, rewrites Harrison on Greek religion. For Pausanias’s value, see e.g. Buxton (1994), 6: ‘the richest single literary source for Greek ritual and many of its accompanying stories’. For Pausanias’s role in ‘a “scientistic” detail-cult’, as Henderson (2001), 218, puts it, compare Fraser (ed.) (1898), vol. 1, xiii-xv, xxv-xxvii, lxvi-lxviii: ‘a description at once so minute and so trustworthy’. Likewise, Geffcken ([1920] 1978), 1, gives a ‘Concise survey of the nature of religious experience during the second and early third centuries [CE]’ that takes its ‘point of departure’ from the ‘witness’ Pausanias whose book ‘reveals what was the sum total of religious consciousness that had remained inalienable in Greek living and thinking’. Pritchett (1998), 55, approvingly quotes Festugière: ‘Pour ce voyage vers la Grèce primitive, Pausanias sera notre guide’.

²⁶ See Alcock (1993), 173.

²⁷ Alcock (1996), 245. Compare Elsner (1992), 12: ‘No other pagan author ... emphasized so insistently the personal and experiential nature of seeing what one sees in the order one travelled in order to see it’. For positive valuations of Pausanias as a guidebook, see e.g. Fraser (ed.) (1898), vol. 1, xxiv; compare Pritchett (1998); Pritchett (1999). On Pausanias and travellers, see now Beard (2001).

²⁸ Trophonios: Paus. 9.39.5-14, esp. 14: γράφω δὲ οὐκ ἀκοὴν ἀλλὰ ἐτέρους τε ἰδὼν καὶ αὐτὸς τῷ Τροφωνίῳ χρησάμενος. Eleusinium: 1.14.3; and note 1.38.7 on Eleusis itself.

allows us not only to see Greece in physical terms, but also to behold Greek culture and religion in action through a participant's eyes: Pausanias is 'experienced' as a source for the history of Greek religion.

More than this, Pausanias's narrative presents contemporary religious experience as contiguous with the Greek past in a way that coincides very well with the scholarly narrative of Greek religious conservatism underlying the perceived usefulness of Pausanias's descriptions as evidence for earlier periods.²⁹ The perception of direct links between the past and present of Greece, and more particularly of an essential *congruence* between such past and present experiences, is a response that Pausanias's text encourages. For instance, the Persian invasion and the later invasion of Greece by the Gauls are closely linked in Pausanias's narrative, particularly by the divine aid given to the Greeks by various gods and heroes.³⁰ This congruence in the theology of war is made explicit by Pausanias when discussing a victory trophy in the vicinity of the sanctuary of Poseidon in Mantinea, commemorating victory over the Lacedaimonians under Agis:³¹

φανῆναι δὲ καὶ τὸν Ποσειδῶνα ἀμύνοντά σφισιν ἔφασαν οἱ Μαντινεῖς, καὶ τοῦδε ἔνεκα τρόπαιον ἐποίησαντο ἀνάθημα τῷ Ποσειδῶνι. πολέμῳ δὲ καὶ ἀνθρώπων φόνοις παρῆναι θεοὺς ἐποίησαν μὲν ὅσοις τὰ ἡρώων ἐμέλησεν ἐν Ἰλίου παθήματα αἰδεσθαι δὲ ὑπὸ Ἀθηναίων ὥς θεοὶ σφισιν ἐν Μαραθῶνι καὶ ἐν Σαλαμῖνι τοῦ ἔργου μετὰσχοιεν· ἐκδηλότατα δὲ ὁ Γαλατῶν στρατὸς ἀπώλετο ἐν Δελφοῖς ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐναργῶς ὑπὸ δαιμόνων. οὕτω καὶ Μαντινεῦσιν ἔπεται οὐκ ἄνευ τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος τὸ κράτος γενέσθαι σφισί.

Pausanias turns first to the Homeric epics in articulating a continuum of divine battle-appearances that runs from Troy, through classical Athens and on to the events surrounding the defence of Delphi against the Gauls.³² The examples which Pausanias cites are redolent with the ideology of Greekness and the place of the Homeric epics in this list is programmatic. But Pausanias's narrative of

For similar 'silences' in Pausanias, see Foccardi (1987). These instances and this silence are overlooked by I. Rutherford (2001), 42-43.

²⁹ On the impression of the past as recent in Pausanias, see Bowie (1996), 213-216; Cherry (2001). For religious conservatism, see e.g. Habicht (1985), 154: 'Pausanias' beliefs are conventional; they do not differ from, for instance, those of Herodotus, writing six hundred years earlier'.

³⁰ Marathon: Paus. 1.28.4, 1.32.4-5; cf. 10.8.7. Against the Gauls: 8.10.9, 10.22.12-23.11. See Alcock (1996), 256-257; also Swain (1996), 340-341, with Paus. 7.15.6 on the Roman slaughter of Arcadians in the place where the Arcadians abandoned the Greeks against Philip in 338 BCE.

³¹ Paus. 8.10.8-9; cited from Rocha-Pereira (ed.) (1973-1981). On this battle, not mentioned elsewhere, c. 250 BCE?, see Habicht (1985), 101-102; Cartledge and Spawforth (1989), 40, 240 n. 6.

³² On the divine defence of Delphi, see esp. Champion (1995).

continuity in the theology of epiphany is by no means unique. For example, we can compare the Lindian temple chronicle, a 99 BCE collation of votive offerings from heroic times onwards, and of appearances of Athene in defence of Lindos from the Persian wars onwards. This collection parallels, in an epigraphic form and in close association with a particular religious site, other more and less 'scholarly' collections of ἐπιφάνειαι being made elsewhere.³³ Pausanias's historical turn in contextualising his own narrative by appeal to a tradition of divine appearances thus has parallels: his scholarly activity is a counterpart of this compilatory project to advertise the continuity of Athene's patronage of Lindos and her temple sanctuary. But the implicit narrative of Pausanias's text goes further than a simple historical turn. Pausanias highlights certain links between exemplary past events and experiences that remain possible in the present, as when he testifies to a supernatural feature of the site of the battle of Marathon:³⁴

ἐνταῦθα ἀνὰ πᾶσαν νύκτα καὶ ἵππων χρεμετίζοντων καὶ ἀνδρῶν μαχομένων
ἔστιν αἰσθέσθαι· καταστῆναι δὲ ἐς ἐναργῆ θεὰν ἐπίτηδες μὲν οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτωι
συνήνεγκεν, ἀνηκόωι δὲ ὄντι καὶ ἄλλως συμβᾶν οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τῶν δαιμόνων
ὀργή.

Pausanias sets up an implicit parallel between the historical experience of supernatural aid in exemplary Greek battles against foreign invasion and the present possibility of experiencing a supernatural recording, so to speak, of one of these battles.³⁵ In this way the religious dimension of these important events

³³ Lindos chronicle: Blinkenberg (ed.) (1915), (ed.) (1941), 149-199. See Chaniotis (1988), 52-57; Higbie (2001), esp. on the Homeric connections of the votives. Compare the Epidaurian stelai as described by Paus. 2.27.3-4; for these as ἐπιφάνειαι, see Herzog (1931), 49, and Chaniotis (1988), 22, despite Jacoby (1923-1958) III B (suppl.), vol. 2, 520 n. 4. On the meaning of the term, see esp. Versnel (1987); cf. Nock (1957) on Pax (1955); Nock ([1972] 1986), 154. The term does not appear in the 'religious sense' until the Hellenistic period; see SIG 398, 18: 278 BCE, Apollo's defence of Delphi against the Gauls. For such collections, see Jacoby (ed.) (1923-1958), III B (suppl.), vol. 1, 652 (apropos the Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπιφάνειαι of Istros); van Straten (1976); Pritchett (1979), 1-46; Chaniotis (1988), 53; Kyriazopoulos (1997). For the use of inscriptions by ancient writers, see Higbie (1999); conversely, for the use of antiquarian works in the compilation of the Lindian temple inscription, see Higbie (2001), 110.

³⁴ Paus. 1.32.4. See Alcock (1996), 252-253: this is part of the 'memorial landscape' of Marathon.

³⁵ Note the warning attached by Pausanias: this experience is dangerous if tested. Pausanias could have found a precedent for such dangers at Marathon in Hdt. 6.117, where an Athenian hoplite sees a supernatural figure at work *against* the Greeks and becomes blind as a consequence. The δαίμονες whose anger is involved in Paus. 1.32.4 are presumably the 'ghosts' of the dead, but the word indicates a heroic status, like those heroes who fought at Delphi against the Gauls in Paus. 8.10.9: ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐναργῶς ὑπὸ δαιμόνων; 10.22.12-23.11. See Fraser (1898), vol. 4, 24, on 6.6.8; Farnell (1921), 76-77, 362-363; Brelich (1958), 90; Kearns (1989), 55.

in the experience of Greek identity is something that continues to be accessible, at least in some form.

For Pausanias, this religious continuity was no doubt yet another justification of his overall project: to explore πάντα τὰ Ἑλληνικά, to show what it might mean for a Greek-speaker from the Greek east during the imperial period to be consciously 'Greek' in Greece itself.³⁶ A recent characterisation of Pausanias as a pilgrim has been criticised on the grounds that a pilgrim is by definition 'someone who believes in full before going'.³⁷ But such a definition does not seem particularly productive in this context, whatever 'believing in full' might entail, when confronted with Pausanias's systematic exploration and exposition of the religious terrain of Greece.³⁸ Just so, for the student of Greek religion it is precisely the synchronic and diachronic continuities evoked by Pausanias's exploration of the Greek world that result in the seductive quality of his *Periegesis* as a curiously experienced text. In this respect, as explorer and experiencer, Pausanias becomes simultaneously a source of evidence and a model of inquiry for those who trace his footsteps. The conceptual role of experience in evaluating religious discourse plays itself out in two ways, both as an implicit guarantee of authenticity and as a reflexive confirmation of the primacy of such experience in the study of ancient religion.

Arguably Pausanias recognised some aspects of these authorising cultural strategies at work in his own text, when he offered the following observation:³⁹

τούτοις Ἑλλήνων ἐγὼ τοῖς λόγοις ἀρχόμενος μὲν τῆς συγγραφῆς εὐηθείας ἔνεμον πλέον, ἐς δὲ τὰ Ἀρκάδων προεληλυθὼς πρόνοιαν περὶ αὐτῶν τοιάνδε ἐλάμβανον· Ἑλλήνων τοὺς νομιζομένους σοφοὺς δι' αἰνιγμάτων πάσαι καὶ οὐκέτι ἐκ τοῦ εὐθέως λέγειν τοὺς λόγους, καὶ τὰ εἰρημένα οὖν ἐς τὸν Κρόνον σοφίαν εἶναι τινα εἵκαζον Ἑλλήνων. τῶν μὲν δὴ ἐς τὸ θεῖον ἡκόντων τοῖς εἰρημένοις χρησόμεθα.

³⁶ Paus. 1.26.4. See Elsner (1992), 5: 'a guide to the formation of Greek religious identity as a form of resistance to the realities of Roman rule'; Elsner (1994), 246-247; Price (1999), 8. For the broader question, see now Goldhill (ed.) (2001).

³⁷ Thus Swain (1996), 342 n. 50, criticising Elsner (1992); and compare Arafat (1996), 10-11. See now I. Rutherford (2001).

³⁸ 'Pilgrimage' is formulated in Greek contexts in terms of *travel* to religious sites: see Dillon (1997), xv-xvi; I. Rutherford (2001). For a pointed example of a 'sceptical pilgrim', see IG IV², 1, 121 [= Edelstein and Edelstein (1945), no. 423], no. 3: ἀφίκετο πολὺ τὸν θεὸν ἰκέτας ... ἀπίσκει τοῖς ἰάμασιν; the man is dubbed Ἀπίστος after his healing. For this 'didactic' function, see Dillon (1994); I. Rutherford (2001), 49.

³⁹ Paus. 8.8.3. See Veyne (1988), 95-100; I. Rutherford (2001), 47.

The experience of Arkadia has apparently transformed Pausanias's perspective. It is undoubtedly important for us to recognise the significance of such formulations within Pausanias's often surprisingly complex narrative of Greek cultural formation, but equally we must wonder if it can be legitimate to adopt such transformational strategies in our own exploration of Greek religion. It was this prospect of Pausanias's experience and an ensuing deflating disappointment that supposedly led to Wilamowitz's deep hostility towards Pausanias when he tried to use Pausanias's text as a guidebook to the region of Olympia.⁴⁰ Pausanias can be praised for drawing his readers so deeply into his Greece, with his mix of travelogue, art criticism and cultural pilgrimage, but we cannot become 'Greeks' ourselves in this way, however seductive the prospect of such an experienced guide may appear.

Just as Pausanias's text remains a crucial resource from which to excerpt 'experienced' facts about Greek religion, so an evaluative dependence upon experience is elsewhere a characteristic method of reading texts relating to religion, even such apparently unambiguous 'religious' texts as hymns and prayers. For example, the corpus of hymnic poetry which we call the Homeric Hymns is generally held to be compromised in religious terms by its lack of cultic context and demonstrable cultic use.⁴¹ One recent treatment of the subject suggests that 'the context of their performance seems distinct from worship proper'; but exactly what worship proper is remains less clear, except as marked by a direct physical association with cult centres.⁴² Cultic context and cultic use are here conceived, not unusually, as distinct from the probable use of at least some of this material along with the longer Homeric epics in Greek festival contexts.⁴³ This principle is generalised across the corpus of archaic and classical poetry, and thus one can write of 'cult poetry', 'hieratic poetry', 'cult hymn actually performed at a festival of Apollo', 'sacred texts', and allow that

⁴⁰ See Habicht (1985), appendix 1, esp. 170-175. For Pausanias and the guidebook experience of Greece, see now Beard (2001).

⁴¹ See e.g. J.-M. Bremer (1981); Furley (1995); J.-M. Bremer (1998b). Compare Clay (1997), 489: 'One thing ... is fairly clear: while sharing many features with prayer and cult hymns, our Hymns show little connection with ritual practice.'. This becomes the rationale for the omission of the Homeric Hymns and the hymns of Kallimakhos from Furley and Bremer (2001), vol. 1, ix; Faulkner (2002) expresses concern, but accepts the basic distinction; Fröhder (1994) considers the smaller hymns in distinct terms. Most recently García (2002), esp. 5-8, sees the Homeric Hymns generally as 'symbolic action' within a ritual context.

⁴² Furley (1995), 29-30. Compare Pausanias on cult-hymns, whose contents he tends to avoid revealing: see N. J. Richardson (ed.) (1974), 11.

⁴³ For the Homeric hymns in festival contexts, see Parker (1991).

the dramatists may include 'faithful copies of hieratic poetry' when needed.⁴⁴ In contrast to such 'hieratic poetry' (or copies thereof), a 'non-cultic' fate befalls a large array of poetic texts which utilise hymnic forms, from Hesiod through Sappho and Alkaios, Pindar, through to Kallimakhos.⁴⁵ In such cases, Bremer comments, 'the poetic intention has made the cultic convention serve a non-cultic purpose'.⁴⁶ But if drama, for example, can go some way towards recreating 'worship proper' (or a 'faithful' copy of it), how might such distinctions function in practice?⁴⁷ What we might take to constitute 'worship proper' in such an analysis is apparently the antithesis of 'poetic intentions'. Yet—admirably but somewhat confusingly—it turns out to be Furley's stated intention to restore a broad range of verbal (including poetic) discourse to a position of greater prominence within the context of Greek religion:⁴⁸

One frequently encounters statements to the effect that Greek piety was a question of honorific deed rather than belief in, or profound cogitation on, aspects of the sacred. Greek hymns tell against that position.

More than this, Furley argues that such hymn texts show how 'worship entailed subtle and linguistically refined communication with deities'.⁴⁹ But it is not enough for such texts simply to evidence the verbal texture of communication in order to count as worship as such.⁵⁰ Instead they remain dependent upon their proximity to ritual experience for their authenticity as documents of worship: cultic contexts make clear the status of texts as 'experienced' religion.⁵¹ This physical proximity acts as a guarantee of authenticity, as a kind of barometer of 'religiosity', so to speak.

⁴⁴ Furley (1995), *passim*; for dramatic copies, note esp. 37: 'a cult hymn ... serves as a useful control to see how closely authors in more literary genres adhere to conventional modes of worship.'

⁴⁵ For criticism of this fate, especially as it applies in Hellenistic contexts, see Hunter (1996), 48-49. Particularly provocative in their presentation of 'cult' are the mimetic hymns of Kallimakhos, on which see esp. Henrichs (1993).

⁴⁶ J.-M. Bremer (1981), 213; cf. Furley (1995), 30: 'A number of lyric poems ... are closely modeled on cult poetry, although the poems themselves express personal concerns'.

⁴⁷ Thus hymns from tragedy and comedy are included in Furley and Bremer (2001). Compare García (2002), 7, on the simultaneous desire and difficulty of finding criteria to distinguish the Homeric Hymns from the hymns of Kallimakhos as evidenced in Burkert (1994).

⁴⁸ Furley (1995), 31-32. By contrast Depew (2000), 255 n. 8, 'cannot agree ... that "belief in, or profound cogitation on, aspects of the sacred" is relevant to the study of (at least early) Greek hymn'. But for Furley's approach, compare Hunter (1992), 29, downplaying divisions between religious and secular, non-literary and literary. Such concern over the devaluation of discourse comes in the wake of an earlier reaction to the devaluation of action as contrasted with thought: see Bell (1998), 206, 218.

⁴⁹ Furley (1995), 45; cf. now Furley and Bremer (2001), vol. 1, 6-7.

⁵⁰ For the 'enunciation' of the Homeric Hymns in this respect, see esp. Calame (1995).

⁵¹ See Furley and Bremer (2001), vol. 1, x, on the arrangement of their material: by cult centre.

In a similar fashion, a recent discussion of Greek prayer begins by insisting on the importance of the extra-linguistic context of prayer in terms which reflect the prioritisation of experience in religious contexts:⁵²

The function and characteristic form of an ancient Greek prayer must certainly have depended upon elements inseparable from the occasion of its utterance.

In some sense this must be a truism, yet in practice the dependence of words upon context is difficult to demonstrate in straightforward terms.⁵³ For example, the undeniable association of prayer with marked locations—as Depew puts it, '[s]uch locations promise, in ways that secular space does not, the future presence of the god'—is not an absolute relationship: Greeks did not have to go to a sanctuary to pray, however effective such or similar marginal spaces may have been in assisting the success of prayer.⁵⁴ Likewise, the relationship between prayer and acts of sacrifice is complicated, and prayer is conceivable without immediate sacrifice.⁵⁵ Verbal form and function are important in their own right, as Depew herself demonstrates, when she explores the performative aspect of the language of prayer as it creates an interpersonal context for itself and for the request that is being made, between the addresser and the (divine) addressee.⁵⁶ This is the text's 'pragmatic function'.⁵⁷ This interpersonal context—above all the presence of the god to hear the prayer—may be enacted through verbal means, and the facility to enact such a context for its utterance demonstrates a basic creative potential of such 'magical' speech to do things, on some level, with words.⁵⁸ A performative approach to such language, in the wake of Austin, can be criticised for ignoring the social production of authority, since, as Bourdieu observes, 'the language of authority never governs without the collaboration of those it governs'.⁵⁹ But the problem with prayer is how to delimit the authorising context of an utterance whose ostensible function is communication with entities beyond mundane contexts of social interaction. Who is ultimately in a position to

⁵² Depew (1997), 229.

⁵³ For the problem, compare Tambiah (1968), 176: 'very often (but not always) if the ethnographer questions his informants "Why is this ritual effective?" the reply takes the form of a formally expressed belief that the power is in the "words" even though the words only become effective if uttered in a very special context of other action'.

⁵⁴ Depew (1997), 236. For 'free' prayer, see Pulleyn (1997), 164-165.

⁵⁵ See Pulleyn (1997), 31-38.

⁵⁶ See esp. Depew (1997); Day (2000); Depew (2000).

⁵⁷ Compare J.-M. Bremer (1998a), 135-136.

⁵⁸ Doing things with words: Austin (1962). 'Magical' speech: Tambiah (1968). For the potential of speech in Homer, note e.g. *Od.* 19.457-458, ἐπαιδῆι δ' αἶμα κελαινὸν | ἔσχεθον (on ἐπαιδῆ, see Graf (1995), 37); more broadly, see Martin (1989).

⁵⁹ Bourdieu (1991), 113; cf. Bourdieu (1977), 21.



authorise my prayer apart from the god?⁶⁰ Prayer is an illocutionary act *qua* ritual but it gestures precisely towards a perlocutionary outcome: by praying I have gained a god's attention.⁶¹ Bergren explicates a version of this ostensive process in the 'sacred apostrophes' that come at the beginning and ends of Homeric Hymns:⁶²

The claim of the apostrophizing voice is that of a "motivated signifier": to indicate the signified not by arbitrary connection, but by its natural semiotic constitution. The effect of "sacred apostrophe" would therefore be the representation of the "transcendental signified", divinity itself. In exchange for the prize, the hymnist offers nothing less than an epiphany of the god.

For the hymnist, the audience forms a third party in a triangular act of communication, whose role is as witness and participant in the capacity of the hymnist to make the god present.⁶³ For the prayer-maker, the communicative act is constituted more as a reflexive expression of reciprocity between two parties, even if it may also have an audience. But in both cases poetic (creative) intentions and that kind of worship which entails 'subtle and linguistically refined communication with deities', to recall Furley's phrase, may be said to meet. The ostensive capacity of words to make such communication possible is similarly utilised by texts whose contextual origins are quite divergent: literary prayers and inscribed prayers from sanctuary contexts are often functionally equivalent in this respect.⁶⁴ It is true that, in the Greek context at least, literary prayers seem to spell things out more explicitly, but this is a different question from their mobilisation of the verbal communication 'technology' of prayer as such.⁶⁵ If we are to authorise one such text over another because the former is inscribed on a votive offering associated with the physical remains of a sanctuary, then we participate in a specific institutional history that reflects our

⁶⁰ This question is already explored in the Homeric epics, through the privilege of the epic narrator. Note esp. *Od.* 3.51-62, where Athene, in the guise of Mentor, prays to Poseidon as she is instructed by Peisistratos and then *fulfills the prayer herself*: 3.62, αὐτὴ πάντα τελέυτα; on this, see further below, p. 143 n. 393, and see also my discussion of *Il.* 6. 286-312 below, pp. 123-125.

⁶¹ In practice, Austin's categories of performatives are not mutually exclusive: see e.g. Tambiah ([1973] 2002), 352.

⁶² Bergren (1982), 85-86.

⁶³ See esp. Bergren (1982), 85; the apparent unawareness of this article in Day (2000), Depew (2000) and García (2002) is surprising. García (2002), 29-34, usefully sums up arguments for this presence as the specific χάρις of the hymn, signalled in the greeting χαίρει at the end; cf. Depew (2000), 74-75. See also Bakker (2002), 72-73, on the 'instative' function of μνήσομαι at *HomHymnAp.* 1.

⁶⁴ Thus e.g. Depew (1997), 242-243.

⁶⁵ For example, see Pulleyn (1997), 16-38, and Parker (1998), 107, on 'if ever' formulae in literary prayers. Perhaps a better term than 'technology' would be 'technique', by which to designate skill, a specific competency; for this distinction, see Ingold (2000), 315-316, 401-402.

dependence upon objective evidence of experience.⁶⁶ When we suggest that only a cultic context can confer real authenticity on religious discourse, then ritual activity has entirely subsumed religion.

These different examples show the importance of experience as a touchstone of religiosity within the history of Greek religion. The consequences of the reading strategies we adopt in reading such 'experienced' discourse are not trivial. I emphasised above how Pausanias's place as a model text in the study of Greek religion depends in part on how Pausanias deploys narratives of present experience in order to reinforce the experiences related by his narratives of the past. Yet when this particular ancient project of cultural exploration is juxtaposed with modern scholarly versions of how to evaluate religious discourse, certain similarities emerge. It is as if, by privileging objective evidence of actual practice, the subjective experience of Greek religion can be uncovered as something that we too can participate in, albeit by proxy, in a manner for which Pausanias functions conveniently both as model and material. Here an observation of Sally Humphreys is perhaps apposite: with William James and Freud pointing the way, scholars of Greek religion of the period from Wilamowitz through Nock and Festugière to Nilsson produced a response that 'was intuitive and predominantly aesthetic, rather than historical'.⁶⁷ By means of experience a path towards uncovering the core of religious belief is to be mapped out, perhaps even to meet the long unsatisfied desire to uncover what the internal religious life of individuals was actually like: thus Mikalson can write that '[w]hat we should most welcome, of course, is a "confessional" literature in which individuals spell out their own religious beliefs'.⁶⁸ In this desire we see demonstrated the central importance of what we choose to read religion as. What is happening in such accounts is a slide from experience understood in some relatively objective sense, 'what actually happened', into experience in a subjective sense, which can then be explicated as belief—QED.

Other consequences flow from this approach. If attention to experience seems to offer a perspective on an interior state of mind, private to a particular individual and thus fundamental to what religion might be thought to be, then as a consequence narratives that are more obviously forms of creative cultural expression, not least the narratives of poetry and drama, are negatively valued

⁶⁶ An invaluable instance of such institutional history is Parker (1996).

⁶⁷ Humphreys (1978), 20.

⁶⁸ Mikalson (1983), 4; with Feeney (1998), 24 n. 41, compare Yunis (1993), 71, on Mikalson's 'real religion': an 'incoherent formulation'.

because of their perceived remoteness from religious experience as such.⁶⁹ Anything that hints at a (creative) formation that is not firmly tied to the contexts of such experience takes on a suspect status qua religion, especially against the background assumption that belief grounded in experience is the central identifying feature of religion.⁷⁰ Reading for experience in this way has been a particular subject of advocacy in certain sectors of religious studies: some argue for a 'pre-cultural' experiential continuity behind mystic experience; others would derive from the apparent immediacy of such experience, especially as relayed in autobiographical narratives, an epistemic immediacy to serve as potential proof of (divine) existence.⁷¹ Against such positions stand those who point out that experience is everywhere mediated through our cultural formation, or, in Bourdieu's terms, our 'history turned into nature' and forgotten as such.⁷² But still the lure of the immediacy of experience remains strong. To put the problem in an (over)simplistic form: where history pursues the objective status of institutions and events, and where anthropology is intersubjectively grounded in the personal interaction between fieldworkers and their subjects, the study of religion, by contrast, and especially the study of religion in historical contexts, stands uncertainly between history and anthropology in pursuing the objective status of (past) subjective experience.

This paradigm of 'experienced' reading is particularly significant in the present context because the appeal of experience as a basic point of reference is strong when reading narratives of divine appearance.⁷³ That is to say, the

⁶⁹ In Greek contexts, see e.g. van Straten (1995), 7-9; cf. Mikalson (1983); Mikalson (1991). For criticism of the 'popular/literary' antithesis, see Parker (1985); Parker (1997). For reflections on what reading might look like in the absence of 'literature' as a category of exclusion and seclusion, see Goldhill (1999).

⁷⁰ An influential formulation is Geertz (1966), 25-26: 'The basic axiom underlying what we may call "the religious perspective" is everywhere the same: he who would know must first believe'; for a critique of the specifically Christian history of these key terms, see Asad (1993), 40-54. On the difficulties inherent in taking 'belief' as a straightforward category of inquiry, see esp. Needham (1972); Sperber (1985a), 45-48; Lopez (1998b); J. Z. Smith (1998), 270-271; Saler (2001). For the privileging of 'belief' in ancient religion as a Christianizing assumption, see Price (1984), 10-11; compare Buxton (1994), 162-163.

⁷¹ See e.g. King (1988); Franks Davis (1989); Forman (ed.) (1990); Forman (1993); Shear (1994).

⁷² See Bourdieu (1977), 78-79, for this characterisation of 'habitus'; cf. Gadamer ([1975] 1989), 346: 'the inner historicity of experience'. For specific critique of the notion of unmediated religious experience, see S. Katz (ed.) (1978); S. Katz (ed.) (1983); Proudfoot (1985); S. Katz (ed.) (1992); Sharf (1998); Bagger (1999); Yamane (2000). In non-Christian contexts, see e.g. Sahlins (1995) on the Hawaiian 'experience' of Cook; and Sharf (1995), who offers what Lopez (1998a), 264-265 n. 16, calls 'a powerful critique of the rhetoric of experience' in the institutional practice of Buddhist studies.

⁷³ For overviews of epiphany in the Greek context, see Pfister (1924); Weniger (1924); Pax (1955); Pax (1962); Wachsmuth (1975); Versnel (1987); Mussies (1988); Henrichs (1996);

implications of such narratives make them significant propositions about the world and it is tempting to posit behind such accounts an originary experience of some sort by which to underpin their authenticity, by reference either to 'what really happened' or to the belief that underlies the account. We fall somewhat unreflectively under the 'spell' of the text, which, in Pucci's words, 'lures us to read and to make sense of the story as though we were really present at the events'.⁷⁴ And so Pfister, in his still fundamental account of Greek epiphany, explicitly conceptualises divine epiphanies in terms of experience and its representation, even as he acknowledges the difficulties that confront a reading of the material in terms of lived experience, or 'subjectiv wahre Visionen':⁷⁵

Der Glaube an diese Form der göttlichen Offenbarung gehört zu den Grundformen religiösen Denkens und Glaubens ... und ist allen Völkern gemeinsam. Aber ebenso auch das religiöse oder visionäre Erlebnis selbst, das diesen Glauben hervorgerufen hat. Dieses, d. h. subjectiv wahre Visionen, von visionär veranlagten Personen geschaut, müssen wir auf Grund der Fülle der E[piphanie]-Berichte auch für die Griechen annehmen, wenn es auch kaum möglich ist, auch nur wenige der uns überlieferten E[piphanien] als subjectiv wahr nachzuweisen ...

At a later point, Pfister discusses these problems of experience and representation at greater length, and the difficulties that they present:⁷⁶

Ob es dann aber weiterhin möglich ist, auf Grund dieser antiken Berichte einen Schluß auf das *religiöse Erlebnis* zu machen, das jene Menschen bei den Visionen hatten, ist eine Frage für sich. Ihre Beantwortung hängt abgesehen von der typischen Gleichförmigkeit der Berichte, die das Erkennen eines individuellen Erlebnisses erschweren, hauptsächlich von der Stellung ab, die der Forscher jenen antiken Berichten gegenüber hinsichtlich der Frage der historischen Wahrheit einnimmt.

Pfister continues by noting the undoubted possibility of such visions, at least as far as comparative material can show. This is clearly quite important to Pfister because such experiences are taken to be ultimately responsible for the material with which his article deals, even if problems remain:⁷⁷

Ohne tatsächlich Visionen wäre auch die Fülle der antiken E[piphanie]-Berichte kaum erklärbar. Aber in dieser großen Masse ... zu unterscheiden, welche von ihnen wirklich als Visionen geschaut worden waren und welche nur in der legendarischen

Graf (1997b). Of these, Pfister (1924) remains the common point of reference; but Versnel (1987) represents the most sophisticated discussion.

⁷⁴ Pucci (1987), 119. From a different perspective, compare Feeney (1991), 2, on 'novelistic conventions of reading'.

⁷⁵ Pfister (1924), col. 281.

⁷⁶ Pfister (1924), col. 316.

⁷⁷ Pfister (1924), col. 316.

Überlieferung existieren, halte ich für unmöglich. Die meisten jener "legendarischen E[piphanien]" können wirkliche Visionen gewesen sein, also "subjectiv wahr" sein; bei *keiner* ist es mit Sicherheit zu erweisen.

This for Pfister is due again to the nature of the tradition. Figures such as Aristides and others present themselves as prone to such visions, but stylisation destabilises the relationship with reality; thus:⁷⁸

Der Frage, ob das Damaskus-Erlebnis des Paulus subjectiv wahr ist, läßt sich eher diskutieren, obwohl wir es auch hier mit einem typischen Bericht zu tun haben; mit demselben Recht könnte man auch die Berufung Hesiods auf dem Helikon für wahr halten, obwohl dem weider, von anderem abgesehen, das typischen Verhältnis des Dichters zur Muse entgegensteht. Wir begnügen uns also hier einstweilen damit, darzustellen, wie nach der Überlieferung die Wirkung der E[piphanie] auf die Menschen war.

Pfister posits 'experience' as the basis of accounts of divine epiphany, while at the same time he can see that it is more or less unreachable: the only thing left to do is describe the tradition and its variety according to generic criteria, and this thoroughly descriptive approach is why Pfister's article remains fundamental in the scholarship, especially as a resource for parallels. The practically-focused interpretative framework offered by Pfister is to divide 'epiphany' into four groups: 'epic epiphany', 'mythical epiphany', 'folktale epiphany', and 'legendary epiphany'.⁷⁹ These groups are distinguished by generic form, but also by their various relationships in temporal terms to the historical period; the first three categories are definitively situated 'in der Vorzeit', yet divine epiphany is not limited to this:⁸⁰

Die bisher behandelten E[piphanien] spielen alle in der Vorzeit; sie treten uns in Mythen, Märchen, und epischen Dichtungen entgegen. Aber der Glaube an die Möglichkeit göttlicher E[piphanie], an die sichtbare Wirksamkeit und Hilfe der göttlichen Wesen war auch in der späteren Zeit noch stark genug ...

This group of 'legendary epiphanies' is distinguished in particular ways, especially in having evident links to cult, whether as cause or effect.⁸¹ Yet in apparent conflict with his generic model, Pfister goes on to observe that many of these later legendary epiphanies are very similar to epic epiphanies,

⁷⁸ Pfister (1924), coll. 316-317.

⁷⁹ Pfister (1924), col. 282.

⁸⁰ Pfister (1924), col. 292.

⁸¹ Pfister (1924), col. 293: 'Die Beziehungen zum kultisch-religiösen Leben des einzelnen sind bei den legendarischen E. sehr viel enger als bei den oben besprochenen drei Gruppen von E.'. Taken as characteristic is Hdt. 6.61, an appearance of Helen in a sanctuary at Therapne: 'Diese E. ist verschieden von der bisher betrachteten drei Gruppen. Sie wird in historischer Zeit bestimmt angesetzt ... Die Erscheinung ist eine Folge des Gebets und geschieht am Ort des Kultes.'

especially in battle contexts, and he draws explicitly on Pausanias in pointing to this similarity, before going on to list examples from Herodotos and others.⁸² The particular passage of Pausanias that Pfister draws on is the one that I quoted above in discussing Pausanias's mobilisation of past and present experience in the delineation of Greek identity.⁸³ In light of my discussion there, the citation of this passage by Pfister raises questions about his categories: how is it that some instances of epic epiphany and legendary epiphany are so similar? What does this relationship imply? In Pausanias this similarity has a clear rationale, since the generic distinctions being made by Pfister do not apply. While Pfister himself does not explicitly follow this Pausanian reasoning through, it is implicit when he posits religious experience as the ultimate basis of the full variety of epiphany accounts.⁸⁴ In the final account, while Pfister's analysis acknowledges the difficulty of reaching through to the subjective religious experience that he posits as the basis of epiphany accounts, at the same time he draws a set of distinctions in generic terms which aim at differentiating various degrees of relationship with historical cult and religious practice. This secondary, pragmatic strategy calls upon experience in another more objective guise and it thus provides Pfister with an apparent route of escape. As such, the entire problem remains framed in the terms that I have suggested above are dominant in reading religious discourse: to study 'divine epiphany' comes down to a question about the objective status of subjective experience.

Pfister does not embark upon trying to winnow out 'real religious experience', even if this is the basic orientation of the framework that he offers. But to spell out the real consequences of this orientation, consider the example of Dietrich's well-known and often cited treatment of divine epiphany in the Homeric poems. Dietrich characterises his subject matter thus:⁸⁵

Surprisingly accounts in Homer of actual divine manifestations are far from clear. They lack method of procedure, so to speak. The circumstances of the epiphany not only vary greatly, but they tend to be confused, contradictory even at times, and quite frequently impossible to visualize ... In short the descriptions of epiphanies are imaginative rather than plausible in the majority of instances.

This reading wants from the text a set of reconstructable and consistent visualisations as proof of the 'plausibility' of Homeric epiphany. Dietrich implies

⁸² Pfister (1924), col. 293.

⁸³ Paus. 8.10.8-9; see p. 12 above.

⁸⁴ Pfister (1924), col. 316, quoted above, pp. 21-22.

⁸⁵ Dietrich (1983), 54.

that by means of such plausible visualisation one may demonstrate or disprove a grounding in reality. This process of visualisation is taken as the touchstone by which to discriminate between what is authentic, which is to say properly part of lived experience, and what is merely 'imaginative'. The negative conclusion that Dietrich reaches itself forms part of an argument which seeks to demonstrate the essential superfluity of the manifestations of the gods in Homer, as a largely poetical extension of a more fundamental process, namely a 'mental' perception of divine power at work.⁸⁶ The criterion of experience which some have located in the objective contexts of religious discourse, as I discussed above in the case of hymns and prayers, is in Dietrich's account substituted by the audience's own subjective experience of plausible visualisation.

This experience-by-proxy, whereby the audience fill in for the absent originator of the image, functions for Dietrich as a reference point by which these epiphanies are found to fall short as 'viable theological concepts'.⁸⁷ But viable for whom exactly? Dietrich comes up against an apparent circle of dependence between Homer and Greek religion at large with some uneasy consequences:⁸⁸

It turns out ... that, with few exceptions, Homeric epiphanies can best be described as picturesque extensions of the more usual working of divine will. To that extent epiphanies were poetic invention, although it seems distinctly odd that such a mode of divine intervention could be generally accepted without being based on religious faith ... It seems that the Greek view of epiphanies involved "double standards". On the one hand in post-Homeric times epiphanies were taken for granted, but on the other invariably conceived in epic terms.

These conclusions are unsettling to Dietrich not least because it is actually an important strand of his work that there is a demonstrable continuity of religion, specifically in types of religious experience, to be found in Greece from the earliest periods, including the influence of Homer over religious conceptions in the archaic and classical *polis*.⁸⁹ In fact, this continuity is another version of the view that Pausanias presents in his discussion of divine appearances, namely

⁸⁶ See Dietrich (1994), esp. 72-73: 'The word epiphany is something of a misnomer therefore in Minoan religion as much as in Homer for describing divine intervention in human affairs.' Compare Dietrich (1997), 3-4, where the 'general rule' is of indirect communication.

⁸⁷ Dietrich (1983), 67.

⁸⁸ Dietrich (1983), 69-70.

⁸⁹ See e.g. Dietrich (1986), 180-181.

that there is congruity between past and present 'Greek' experience. Thus confronted by the oddity of Homeric epiphany, Dietrich writes at one point:⁹⁰

This epic idea of feasible but unlikely divine epiphany continued in Greek literature and beyond [with a] tenacious hold over popular imagination.

'Beyond' in this instance is illustrated by Dietrich with the 'ludicrous incident at Lystra' as told in Acts, where Paul and Barnabas are mistaken for Zeus and Hermes.⁹¹ Dietrich's unease here gives way to ridicule of an apparent instance of 'popular' belief in a supposedly implausible epic epiphany. But in so doing Dietrich unwittingly ventriloquises the foundational polemics of Acts as his own.⁹² One should ask instead at what point exactly the 'double standards' that Dietrich alleges are supposed to have originated? To suggest that the non-theologically-viable products of Homeric imagination can nonetheless become part of the religious life of later periods itself calls into question the conception of theological viability with which the analysis began. If the failure of the proxy-experience of plausible visualisation disqualifies these epiphanies as authentically religious, how exactly did they manage to overcome this 'in post-Homeric times'? This method of evaluating Homeric epiphany through the rationalising prism of plausible visualisation seems to falter at precisely this point: 'it seems distinctly odd ...'. The recurrent problem can be recast in Pfister's terminology: how is it that such 'epic' epiphanies can become 'legendary' or cultic epiphanies?

Such an approach to the religious aspects of the Homeric poems in terms of experience and its concomitant, belief, is not of recent origin. A key article by Jørgensen in 1904 pointed out some distinctive differences in the ways that the poetic narrator and the characters represent the gods in the *Odyssey*.⁹³ Others subsequently put Jørgensen's observations to use in various ways.⁹⁴ Ehnmark summarises an influential view:⁹⁵

Here we are no doubt concerned with the conscious use of a special stylistic device. Jørgensen [sic] supposed it to be a conventional literary artifice, but this theory cannot be upheld. On the contrary, Homer, in order to achieve realism in his

⁹⁰ Dietrich (1997), 3-4.

⁹¹ Acts 14.8-18.

⁹² Compare esp. Acts 14.13-15, where Paul and Barnabas, hearing of the prospective sacrifices in their honour, cry out: "ἄνδρες, τί ταῦτα ποιεῖτε;".

⁹³ Jørgensen (1904). For its influence, see Clay (1983), 22-23; Pelliccia (1995), 251 and n. 251.

⁹⁴ See esp. Nilsson (1924), 376-377; compare Nilsson (1967), vol. 1, 218-219. For the 'classic' status of Nilsson (1924), see Tsagarakis (1980), 57 n. 2. Jørgensen's insight has also been developed in narratological terms: see Griffin (1986); de Jong (1988); Winterbottom (1989); de Jong (1997).

⁹⁵ Ehnmark (1935), 65-66.

characterization, has evidently attempted to give a psychologically correct description of the way in which men think and talk. According to Hedén, who was the first to show the importance of Jörgensen's discovery for the study of Homeric religion, it furnishes us with a means of distinguishing between the purely poetical treatment of the gods and the living religious faith which the poet took for granted in his audience, or, in so far as he was deliberately archaizing, in the Trojan heroes.

The experience, characterised in terms of faith or belief, that lay behind this psychological realism thus became a means by which to distinguish between the properly religious and non-religious material in the Homeric text.⁹⁶ The depiction of the gods in Homer became polarised, between this psychologically realistic experience ('faith') on the one hand, and on the other those elements deemed to belong to the 'purely poetical treatment of the gods'. These latter elements are precisely those which came to be stigmatised as 'Götterapparat', or 'Göttermaschine'; as Bremer comments, dissatisfaction with this aspect of the Homeric poems in terms of religion mirrored dissatisfaction with the device as poetry.⁹⁷ Thus Nilsson concluded in the following terms:⁹⁸

Das [i.e. gods as personal 'Schutzgötter'] ist die letzte Anwendung der Göttermaschine und zugleich die der dichterischen Gestaltung gefährlichste, indem sie, zur abgenutzen und stets bereiten Formel herabgesunken, den Hauptreiz der Dichtung, die Darstellung des Menschlichen, verdrängt und mit dem leeren Gerassel der Göttermaschine ersetzt.

Bremer points out that this polarising approach achieved canonical status when it entered the pages of Schmid's *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur*, until, at least, the work of Lesky.⁹⁹ Of course, the approach took varying forms. Ehnmark, for instance, adopted the basic polarity but modified its operation so as to include specifically anthropomorphic conceptions of the gods more centrally in his analysis; but the basic point remained:¹⁰⁰

To this belief [in personal individualised gods] the poet's own description adds nothing of religious value and for that very reason does not clash with it. For a correct appreciation, from the point of view of religion, of the poetic treatment of the gods it is essential that due regard should be paid to the fact that it was

⁹⁶ Compare Nilsson (1967), vol. 1, 218-219: 'Es herrscht ein deutlicher Unterschied zwischen der hergebrachten mythologischen Form des Epos und dem wirklichen Glauben des homerischen Menschen, den der Dichter in den Reden seiner Personen dem Leben abgelauscht hat.'

⁹⁷ J.-M. Bremer (1987), 31-32.

⁹⁸ Nilsson (1924), 390.

⁹⁹ J.-M. Bremer (1987), 32 and n. 2; Lesky (1961).

¹⁰⁰ Ehnmark (1935), 103.

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⁹⁸ Nilsson (1924), 390.

⁹⁹ J.-M. Bremer (1987), 32 and n. 2; Lesky (1961).

¹⁰⁰ Ehnmark (1935), 103.

largely devoid of religious significance, since to the Greeks mythology was not a sacred history, the object of faith in the modern sense of the word.

Ultimately, this analysis is not so different from Dietrich's in privileging certain criteria, here 'psychological realism', there 'plausible visualization', as a means of gaining access to 'faith' or 'belief' as experienced by 'Homeric man'. The specifically Christian lineage of key terms like 'faith' should be noted. What results is a way to extract some aspects of the Homeric poems as virtual artefacts of Homeric experience, so as to be able to fit these remains into a putative continuity of Greek 'belief', which is to say, Greek religion; the surplus can then be discarded as merely poetical.¹⁰¹ Leaving aside for a moment the problematic implications of taking belief as the central category of Greek religion, it is clear that this method consists of an attempt to uncover authentically religious aspects of the Homeric poems by reference to a continuity of experience supposedly underlying the epics themselves.

Of course, Homeric scholarship has covered much ground since Nilsson.¹⁰² But a conceptual emphasis on experience in approaching the status or authority of the Homeric texts as 'religious' continues to be influential.¹⁰³ This can be the case even when, as Erbse has done, traditional valuations of the gods in Homer in terms of religion are turned on their head.¹⁰⁴ For Erbse the 'Götterapparat' is entirely necessary, not because it reflects *religious* experience—it does not: 'Es ist kaum möglich ... den Dichter für ein bloßen Nachahmer des sogenannten Volksglaubens zu halten'¹⁰⁵—, but because it is an essential component in representing the mental experience of Homeric man:¹⁰⁶

Die epischer Dichter benötigte die Götter, weil er von Menschen, die noch keine Freiheit des Handelns kannten, nur mit ihrer Hilfe sinnvoll erzählen konnte.

¹⁰¹ Compare Nilsson (1924), 376: 'Wollen wir die wirkliche Religion der homerischen Menschen erfassen, müssen wir uns nach der anderen Seite wenden und die durch Mythos und dichterische Form entwickelte Fortwucherung zunächst fallen lassen.' See van Wees (1992), 7, for criticism of the similar methodology of those who seek historical source material in Homer by discarding the supernatural and the implausible.

¹⁰² For a brief overview relevant to the Homeric gods, see pp. 49-50 nn. 11-15 below.

¹⁰³ See e.g. Tsagarakis (1977), vii-xviii, esp. xvi: 'The problem for the modern reader is to know what exactly existed in contemporary religion in terms of concepts of divine power'; and xviii, where the hope expressed is 'to establish reasonably well if and to what extent Homeric man's concepts of divine power are based on actual religious beliefs of ordinary Greek worshippers.'

¹⁰⁴ Erbse (1986), 295-307.

¹⁰⁵ Erbse (1986), 4.

¹⁰⁶ Erbse (1986), 299; note J.-M. Bremer (1987), 43-44.

There are positive consequences: the Götterapparat is redeemed as such within the poetic priorities of the narrative. But this is achieved only in terms of its relationship with this Homeric mode of mental experience:¹⁰⁷

In Wirklichkeit verlieren die Götter ihren Sinne (und damit die Berechtigung ihrer Existenz) überall dort, wo sich nicht mehr zur Ergänzung und Führung der Menschen da sind.

Erbse's approach draws upon a particular genealogy of human mental experience, namely Snell's *The Discovery of the Mind*, and it is this narrative that underpins his reading of the Homeric gods as 'real' only insofar as they connect with the specific mental experience of Homeric Greece. The urge to ground Homeric representations of the gods in actual experience of some sort thus persists as an authorising criterion, and material that does not connect with this experience is relegated in a familiar fashion:¹⁰⁸

Ihr himmlisches Treiben ist ohne diese ihre eigentliche Funktion nur beschwingte, aber ziellose Heiterkeit ... in so lieblichen Bildern ihrer Isolierung sind die Götter nur noch ein schöner, aber nutzloser poetischer Traum.

In Erbse's analysis, the Homeric gods in some places are only a 'poetic dream', but in others are intrinsically grounded in Homeric psychology. But that the gods may function anywhere as a psychological mechanism is itself ultimately dependent upon the belief of Homeric man, 'daß sie das Wirken der Götter an sich und anderen erleben'.¹⁰⁹ Insofar as the Homeric gods possess any legitimacy in Erbse's reading, it is as documents of this psychological experience.

Another approach to the problematic status of the Homeric poems as religious discourse is exemplified by Emlyn-Jones's thoughtful article on the Homeric gods.¹¹⁰ The emphasis there is on taking the gods 'seriously', whatever this means exactly, above all because the authority of the epic poet and the authorising belief of the audience of epic meet at such points.¹¹¹ It is in the resulting mediation between poetry and belief that Emlyn-Jones locates 'the reality of the Homeric gods for their Greek audiences', a reality which he also seeks to demonstrate by appealing briefly to the physical remains of cult as

¹⁰⁷ Erbse (1986), 300.

¹⁰⁸ Erbse (1986), 300.

¹⁰⁹ Erbse (1986), 4.

¹¹⁰ Emlyn-Jones (1992), 91-103.

¹¹¹ Emlyn-Jones (1992), 96. For such 'seriousness', see esp. Griffin (1980), 144 and n. 1, where he takes as a chapter epithet a comment by Marg (1956), 2: 'Es ist eigentlich kaum zu umgehen, Homer religiös ernst zu nehmen'; the paragraph continues: 'Sch[rade]s Buch ist erfüllt von der Vorstellung, daß die homerischen Gedichte religiöse Zeugnisse ersten Ranges sind, daß sie voll sind von Religion. Mit Recht.'

they might relate to the Homeric poems.¹¹² Homeric representations of the gods once again function as religious insofar as they relate to 'actual religious beliefs', recalling Tsagarakis's formulation, but in a marked difference from Tsagarakis the relationship is not a univalent one.¹¹³ The Homeric poems participate directly in the 'poetically mediated Greek view of the gods', and consequently the process envisioned is a dynamic one. This seems to have potential. But where to go from here? For modern readers of the gods in Homer, Emlyn-Jones holds out a challenge:

[Our] inheritance makes it quite hard for us to grasp the reality of the Homeric gods for their Greek audiences—to take an "imaginative leap" into a culture for which the polarities described above did not exist, or at least not to a great extent, and not for the majority of listeners.

The authorising process mediating poetry and belief, within which Emlyn-Jones locates the reality of the Homeric gods, depends upon a particular vision of the cultural context: 'for the Greeks of Homer's time, poetry was not apart from religion, but *the* essential medium of human knowledge about the gods'.¹¹⁴ But are we then just to take it on faith, so to speak, that Homer is somehow more or less synonymous, *pars pro toto*, with archaic and classical Greek religious conceptions of the gods and thus with what was 'believed'? This is what is implied by the caution Emlyn-Jones expresses about Feeney's truism that 'the experience of Homer's poetry is not simply commensurate with the experience of religion'.¹¹⁵ And in practice, by the end of Emlyn-Jones's article, the potential dynamism between the authority of poetry and the authority of belief has somehow been left to one side, and instead Homer is virtually superimposed on 'religious belief'. But Feeney has rightly criticised the assumption that 'there was a golden age when poet and audience, poetry and religion, art and experience were all in seamless accord'.¹¹⁶ The question remains: can the dynamism towards which Emlyn-Jones points be more fully explored? What is missing in these accounts is an explicit understanding of how a dynamics between 'poetry' and 'belief' might actually function.

If I have lingered over treatments of Homer here it is not only because this thesis is centrally focused on the Homeric texts. More than this, the

¹¹² 'Reality': Emlyn-Jones (1992), 103. Remains of cult: 99-100.

¹¹³ Tsagarakis (1977), vii-xviii; as quoted above, p. 27 n. 103.

¹¹⁴ Emlyn-Jones (1992), 103.

¹¹⁵ Emlyn-Jones (1992), 99; for the context of Feeney's remark, see Feeney (1991), 4 n. 4: 'his [i.e. Erbse (1986)] fundamental point, that the experience of Homer's poetry is not simply commensurate with the experience of religion, is theoretically irrefutable'.

¹¹⁶ Feeney (1991), 3; cf. Feeney (1998), 23.

Homeric texts constitute a basic litmus-test of the larger question of religious discourse in Greek contexts. How are scholars to deal with these archaic texts, themselves peculiarly 'authoritative' in the terms outlined by Herodotos, for example, but which are nonetheless 'poetic' in a creative sense?¹¹⁷ These texts both for themselves and for their ongoing importance within Greek culture raise insistent questions about the status and nature of religious discourse: how we choose to read Homer and related texts like the Homeric Hymns deeply implicates how we approach Greek religion in its broader manifestations.¹¹⁸ Characteristically, the treatment of the depiction of the gods in Homer has tended to be polarised in terms of an opposition between religious or psychological experience—read also 'faith', 'belief'—and the 'purely poetical treatment of the gods', to borrow Ehnmark's words. There are alternative strategies to this pursuit of experience: for instance, Pucci has some provocative and sophisticated observations to make on Homeric epiphany and its 'innuendos'.¹¹⁹ But what has not been satisfactorily explained is how these Homeric epiphanies actively relate to their broader cultural contexts. This is not a question of 'literature and life', but one of how various levels of cultural expression interact with one another.¹²⁰ For this we might compare Sourvinou-Inwood's approaches to Greek culture, or Feeney's astute consideration of related questions in his *Literature and Religion at Rome*.¹²¹ Both exemplify in different forms the search for ways beyond the strait-jacket of traditional dichotomies when considering how religious or mythological discourse relates to religion in other cultural guises. But there remains a basic desideratum, exemplified by the point at which Emlyn-Jones's analysis breaks off: namely a more sophisticated understanding of how the cultural practices that the Homeric epics represent—'traditional' poetry, performed and transmitted in central contexts of social interaction—engage with these ongoing contexts of performance and reception, not least in matters of religion. I will return to this problem directly in the next section of this chapter.

Here I want to offer some reflections on why the various approaches explored above revolve so centrally around 'experience' as a determinant of

¹¹⁷ Hdt. 2.53.

¹¹⁸ The considered omission of the Homeric Hymns and the hymns of Kallimakhos from Furley and Bremer (2001) is just such a consequence. See above, p. 16 n. 47.

¹¹⁹ Pucci ([1985] 1998d); Pucci (1987), esp. 110-122; Pucci ([1988] 1998b).

¹²⁰ Compare M. Clarke (1999), esp. 229-284, for how 'the dynamics of mythical image-making' might be explored in terms of levels of cultural expression, but internal to the epics themselves; see my review, Stevens (2001). See also Peradotto (1997) on the Homeric poet and 'tradition'.

¹²¹ Sourvinou-Inwood (1991), esp. 3-23; Sourvinou-Inwood (1995); Feeney (1998), esp. 12-25.

religious authenticity. The historical role of Pausanias's 'experienced' narrative in the study of Greek religion is clearly one facet of this preoccupation. But in specific relation to narratives of divine appearances, it is significant that Pfister concludes his discussion of this issue with the 'calling' (or 'vocation') of Paul and Hesiod.¹²² This odd pairing exemplifies an important feature of the history of classical studies, namely how cross-implicated the study of Greco-Roman antiquity has been in exploration of the authenticity and authority of Biblical texts.¹²³ Exemplary in this history was Wolf's use of Eichhorn's *Einleitung ins Alte Testament* as model in the formulation of the 'Homeric Question': from Wolf's views on the development of the Homeric text further implications emerged for the authority of the Biblical text.¹²⁴ To adopt a position on the composition of Homer became to imply a position on the history of the Old Testament in particular, and thus: '[t]he final large cultural element that rendered the Homeric Question such a lively area of controversy was its relationship to the Bible.'¹²⁵ In this respect, when scholarly accounts of divine epiphany in antiquity turn out to privilege experience as the means by which to determine their place inside or outside Greek religious history proper, it is arguable that the conceptual categories brought to bear are influenced by a set of questions about divine epiphany in particular, and about religion more generally, that owe much to the Western tradition's encounters (especially after the Reformation) with the authority of the Bible and with the New Testament narrative of incarnation, witness, and revelation.

The reaction of Thomas to the report of Jesus's epiphany is perhaps an underlying model here, insofar as scholarship has tended to resort to questions about experience and belief in order to read accounts of divine epiphany. Thomas's doubt constitutes a framing question already written into the text of

¹²² Pfister (1924), coll. 316-317: 'das Damaskus-Erlebnis des Paulus ... die Berufung Hesiods auf dem Helikon'; for fuller context, see above, p. 22.

¹²³ Compare Bolgar (1958), 313: 'The study of Greek was held to involve a new approach to the Bible, which apart from all questions of heresy constituted an open threat to existing academic methods. If philologists were competent to solve questions of faith, logicians were in danger of losing their influence.' Some prominent figures: on Valla's *Annotationes* to the New Testament, see e.g. D'Amico (1988), 16-17; on the work of Erasmus, combining classical languages, scholarly criticism and 'veritas evangelica', see e.g. Pfeiffer (1976), 74-78; Rummel (1985), 89-102; D'Amico (1988), 32-38; and for controversies in English scholarship over the text of the New Testament involving Bentley among others, see e.g. Reynolds and Wilson ([1968] 1991), 186-187; Haugen (2001), 156-160.

¹²⁴ For Wolf, see Grafton, Most and Zetzel (1985). Compare Graziosi (2001), 246-247.

¹²⁵ Turner (1997), 142-144; cf. Grafton, Most and Zetzel (edd.) (1985), 20-26.

John, and as such it offers a preemptive hermeneutic within which audiences are invited to respond:¹²⁶

Θωμᾶς δὲ εἷς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα, ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος, οὐκ ἦν μετ' αὐτῶν ὅτε ἦλθεν Ἰησοῦς. ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ οἱ ἄλλοι μαθηταί· Ἐωράκαμεν τὸν Κύριον. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Ἐάν μὴ ἴδω ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων καὶ βάλω τὸν δάκτυλόν μου εἰς τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων καὶ βάλω μου τὴν χεῖρα εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω. Καὶ μεθ' ἡμέρας ὀκτὼ πάλιν ἦσαν ἔσω οἱ μαθηταί αὐτοῦ, καὶ Θωμᾶς μετ' αὐτῶν. ἔρχεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων, καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ εἶπεν· Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν. εἶτα λέγει τῷ Θωμᾷ, Φέρε τὸν δάκτυλόν σου ὧδε καὶ ἴδε τὰς χεῖράς μου, καὶ φέρε τὴν χεῖρά σου καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν μου, καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός.

The peculiarly embodied form of this interaction between Jesus and Thomas offers a proxy experience that serves as a paradigmatic response to the doubt expressed by Thomas: φέρε τὴν χεῖρά σου καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν μου, καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός. This proxy experience itself models the New Testament narrative of incarnation in precise terms.¹²⁷ In this respect, the text teaches a particular Christian hermeneutic of how experience overcomes doubt and becomes belief, even if it would be better not to have doubted at all.¹²⁸ Accordingly, if Reformation thinkers moved the emphasis for the authorisation of Christian scripture and practice away from an institutional grounding in the authority of the Church towards a grounding in a newly personalised experience, then they were responding to a reading of the Gospel itself.¹²⁹ It is just such a paradigm that is Versnel's target when he asks the question, '[w]hat did ancient man see when he saw a god?', and in order to make his point about 'the essentially ambiguous nature of ancient—if not all—epiphany phenomena', he pointedly begins and ends with the New Testament conversion narrative par excellence, namely Paul on the road to Damascus.¹³⁰ While some have

¹²⁶ John 20.24-27; cited from Tasker (ed.) (1964).

¹²⁷ See Scarry (1985), 214-220, esp. 215: 'Belief comes not, as so often in the Old Testament, by being oneself wounded but by having the wound become the object of touch ... in the Gospels we begin with the body of God and move relentlessly toward the more extreme materialization, the exposure of the interior of Jesus in the final wounds of the crucifixion.' The precise terms of this incarnation remained a subject of theological dispute, as e.g. in controversies over the nature of the Eucharist: see Wagner (1986), 96-125; J. Z. Smith (1987), 99-102.

¹²⁸ Note the conclusion that Jesus draws, John 20.29: λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, "Ὅτι ἐώρακάς με, πεπίστευκας; μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες. Compare Lopez (1998b), 22: 'When one looks up belief in the *Encyclopedia of Religion*, one finds the instruction: "see Doubt". ... [U]nder "Belief" in *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, one is advised to "see Faith".'

¹²⁹ Compare the post-Reformation 'shift to belief as the defining characteristic of religion' with the shift towards the personal: see J. Z. Smith (1998), 270-271, and Winquist (1998), 226-227.

¹³⁰ Versnel (1987), 42.

explicitly approached the archaic and classical Greek material as precursors to epiphany in the New Testament—with the benefits that no doubt accrue from greater attention to the cultural contexts of these later texts—this practice of conceptual cross-referencing is more widely spread.¹³¹ To this extent, treatments of Greco-Roman epiphany have featured certain assumptions about epiphany and the telling of it which reflect priorities that stem directly from the central cultural position of Biblical narratives in Western cultural life over the last 500 years. No doubt more could be said in a more nuanced way on this topic. But it is not too much to say here that this concentration, when we read religious discourse, on experience in both social and individual forms owes much to the prominence within formative Western cultural narratives of possibilities for intrusion into the world from without and of questions about how people may be able to recognise and experience such possibilities for themselves. Historically, the New Testament narrative of incarnation, witness and revelation has been a key problem in the (religious) history of Europe and the Americas. But even now personal, institutional and governmental concern with such phenomena as Marian visions and UFO encounters are striking evidence of continued cultural concern with the authenticity and authorisation of narratives of encounters with the distinctively 'other'.¹³² It is appropriate to bear the conceptual implications of such concerns in mind.

If I am here seeking to problematise experience as an analytical category when it comes to divine appearances, I do so to underline that this preoccupation with 'experienced' texts may in fact derive from specific conceptual pressures developed in very different cultural contexts from those in which these texts in question were actually produced. Religious experience, understood in an originary sense, and/or belief, understood as a grounding

¹³¹ For explicit approaches, see Pax (1955); Brenk (1994).

¹³² For UFOs, see e.g. Lewis (1995); Saler, Ziegler and Moore (1997); Lieb (1998); Saler (2001), 47-48. Pollsters say 1 in 4 American adults 'avowedly believe that extra-terrestrial beings have actually landed on Earth': Saler, Ziegler and Moore (1997), ix; compare the X-Files as 'fiction' with the documents on the 'Roswell incident' released under freedom of information legislation by the American Federal Bureau of Investigation: <<http://foia.fbi.gov/unusual.htm>> [last accessed 4 June 2002]. On the place of Marian and other visions within the Catholic Church and the 'set of doctrinal and pastoral criteria for distinguishing the genuine from the illusory', see Pelikan (1996), 78; Wiebe (1997), 28-30. For internal perspectives, see above, p. 7 n. 7, on Medjugorje; also Rahner (ed.) (1975), 1806-1807 s.v. 'Visions', and the 'Theological Commentary' by Cardinal Ratzinger, appended to the material on the controversial 'Message of Fatima' released by the Catholic Church in May 2000, especially the sections headed 'Public Revelation and private revelations—their theological status' and 'The anthropological structure of private revelations': <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000626_message-fatima_en.html> [last accessed 4 June 2002].

reality, need not be taken as the basic reference point of religious discourse. The example of Pausanias's seductively 'experienced' text highlights the perils of assuming that experience is necessarily anything more than a strategic effect implicitly or explicitly directed at particular ends, especially when it comes to such topics as the appearance and participation of gods in the world. Likewise, the questions that remain when external contexts are privileged over internal constituency in particular forms of religious discourse, such as hymns and prayers, point to the specific institutional consequences of taking external evidence of experience as the key marker of authentic religion. The pursuit of authentic experience continues to arise in various forms in scholarship dealing directly with the discourse of epiphany, for example in the Homeric epics, without due consideration for the consequences of taking 'experience' as the evaluative basis of the study of religion. What I want to do now is to turn to the specific problem of the Homeric epics, and to develop a *narrative* understanding, grounded in a hermeneutic of performance and reception, of how such poetry might participate in religious discourse, as understood not on the basis of originary experience but in terms of an active exploration of meaning and sensation in the world.



Narration, creation and participation

The problem of experience in the scholarly literature on religious discourse reflects deep uncertainty over how to ground verbal discourse, especially poetry and related 'fictions', in reality. Positing an ur-experience, or, more weakly, the experience of belief, are apparent ways out of this problem, but they reduce such verbal discourse implicitly or explicitly to the level of representation. I have explored above some of the conceptual difficulties that this strategy brings with it in the study of religion. What I want to consider now is how speech and poetry as a subset of speech structure a progression through time, and thus constitute 'experiences' in themselves. What opens up here are two distinct uses of 'experience', the one a residue or result, the other a process; these uses can distinguished in German by the two terms, 'Erlebnis' and

'Erfahrung', and the productive consequences of this distinction are fundamental to Gadamer's hermeneutics.¹³³ In particular, Gadamer has shown that this distinction is key to understanding what verbal discourse can offer its participants, beyond a reductive view of language as representation and denomination.¹³⁴ This general point about verbal discourse applies particularly to traditional epic narrative in view of the peculiar position this mode of speech occupies in its cultural contexts. In this way, the Homeric epics can be understood as active explorations in poetic speech of the modalities and significance of 'being-in' a world of heroes, gods, battles, honour, homecoming and revenge, and not as 'art' or 'literature' in the sense that such things are understood to constitute a distinct domain at one remove from the world. In later Greek contexts, such as in the case of Pausanias whose Homeric perspective on divine battle interventions I have discussed above, it is clear that the Homeric poems were in the first instance texts that participated, especially through their prominence in educational contexts, in the complex making and moulding of the Greek world and its ways.¹³⁵ Aspiration to such a role is fundamental, in my view, to the traditional poet's craft from the beginning.

Two recent developments in scholarship on Homeric poetry are particularly useful in articulating ways to connect the cognitive (speech, narrative, image) with the cultural (performance, audience, participation, authority). The first is the analysis, notably by Bakker, of epic poetry (even in its current written form) as (a transcript of) speech, a flow of verbal discourse through time.¹³⁶ Conceiving epic as speech offers specific impetus to attempts to found the understanding of Homeric 'orality' on firmer cognitive grounds.¹³⁷ Where Bakker has attended to the language and syntax of the Homeric epics as a kind of special speech, others have pursued similarly framed projects in

¹³³ On Gadamer's German usage, see the translators' preface to Gadamer ([1975] 1989), xii-xiv; for experience as 'one of the most obscure [concepts] we have', see Gadamer ([1975] 1989), 346-362. For the distinction, see also Ingold (2000), 98-100.

¹³⁴ See Gadamer ([1975] 1989), esp. 383-389.

¹³⁵ For Homer and Greek education, see Buffière (1956), 10-13; Havelock (1963); Marrou (1965), 31-41, 246-247; Goldhill (1986), 139-142; Lamberton (1997), 41-43. Compare also Rudhardt (1988), 48-49: 'L'oeuvre destinée à charmer ou à instruire dans différents domaines peut, en matière religieuse, avoir autant d'autorité qu'un texte liturgique'.

¹³⁶ See esp. Bakker (1993), (1997); Bakker and Kahane (1997). Compare Reichl (2000b), 23: 'Classicists and medievalists tend to see traditional epics like the *Iliad* or the *Chanson de Roland* as texts only ... But as oral epics ... they are not primarily texts but speech events.' By contrast, Feeney (1991), 1-4, writes of epic's depiction of the gods as 'a form of speech with its own definitive and characteristic modes', but in practice treats it as 'a problem of fiction'.

¹³⁷ Martin (1989), 1-10, is fundamental.

relation to Homeric epic as a kind of special storytelling.¹³⁸ The central motivation is to understand how such poetry is cognised, in performance-reception, as a flow of speech through time, whether at the level of verbal texture or with more extensive attention to larger structures within Homeric narrative, such as the type-scene.

The second relevant perspective is the refocusing of attention, notably by Nagy, onto the mimetic aspects of the (epic) poet's performance, in terms of the presentation of speech and action within the frame of the performer-audience interaction.¹³⁹ A key point here is that such mimesis is not representation, but presentation or enactment in a more direct sense.¹⁴⁰ 'Past-experience' is always beyond grasp, but the generation in the present of 'experience-of-the-past' through the active communicative processes of memory and speech is always potentially at hand. This again is Gadamer's distinction between experience as residue and experience as process. The specific preoccupation of Greek epic with memory of the past framed *in the present tense* is not accidental.¹⁴¹ Moreover, the conceptual gains to be derived from Bakker's focus on speech become particularly evident within this performative frame. Nagy puts it thus in his introduction to Bakker's *Poetry in Speech*: 'Homeric discourse represents itself as the verbalization of a heroic world that is literally visualized by those very special agents of divine memory.'¹⁴² Putting these approaches together offers a means of relating the constituency of the text itself directly to the contexts in which and for which this performance-poetry was generated.¹⁴³ Further than this, it opens up the

¹³⁸ See esp. Minchin (2001).

¹³⁹ For concise statement, see Nagy (1996b), 60-61, 84-86. See also Detienne ([1967] 1996); Thalmann (1984); Ford (1992).

¹⁴⁰ See Ford (1992), 196: 'In some sense epic reanimates the heroes, restoring them to action and speech'; Bakker (1993), 18-19; Nagy (1996b), 61: 'In line with this pattern of thinking, a Homeric narration or a Homeric quotation of a god or hero speaking within a narrative are not at all representations: they are the real thing.' For 'enactment', see Silk (1995), 126: 'Enactment does not evoke existence outside language, so much as our belonging to that existence.'

¹⁴¹ For memory and Greek epic, see esp. Ford (1992), 53: 'The function of this memory is not simply preservation of the past but a psychological experience, to change the present frame of awareness'. See also Vernant ([1965] 1983), 75-105; Detienne ([1967] 1996), 39-52; Nagy ([1979] 1999), 17; Thalmann (1984), 146-151; Dickson (1995), 70-72; Bakker (1997), 78-79; Bakker (2002), 67-70.

¹⁴² Nagy (1997a), ix.

¹⁴³ Without becoming tied to a particular time and place; but for a intriguing reading of Homer in Athens, see Haubold (2000), 145-196, building on Cook (1995); more broadly, see esp. Herington (1985). Note Bakker (1993), 3, on the philological acceptability of working from 'observable properties' of the Homeric text to its performance context, and not the other way around. There has been much written for and against the implications of orality for the text of Homer as we possess it; see recently Janko (1990); Bird (1994);

possibilities (and constraints) of our continued engagement with Homeric poetry as (belated) *audiences* of the (crystallised, one-sided because written) communication of Greek epic performance-poetry: Homer 'speaks' to us also.¹⁴⁴

A third perspective is also relevant, drawn this time not from classical studies but from what might be termed 'ecological' anthropology. Traditional story-telling, it is argued by Ingold, constitutes not a cultural modelling of the world in representational terms, but a means of directing the attention of participants (performer and audience) further '*into* the world'; that is to say, such narratives 'amount not to a metaphorical representation of the world, but to a form of poetic involvement' or 'dwelling' in the world.¹⁴⁵ Ingold puts it thus:¹⁴⁶

Far from dressing up a plain reality with layers of metaphor, or representing it, map-like, in the imagination, song, stories and designs serve to conduct the attention of performers *into* the world, deeper and deeper, as one proceeds from outward appearances to an ever more intense poetic involvement.

This perspective gives specific impetus to situate the approaches of Bakker and Nagy in relation to a fundamental aspect of Greek epic poetry, namely the uncovering of the past in the present as a revelation of the constitution of the world between the 'then' and the 'now'—as a process of *aletheia*.¹⁴⁷ This unconcealment, which amounts to a kind of invention of time in the relation between present and past, is particularly apparent in the Hesiodic poetry that

Lord (1995); Nagy (1996b); Nagy (1997b); Nagy (1997c); Powell (1997); Janko (1998a); Janko (1998b); Nagy (1998); Nagy (1999a); M. L. West (1998); M. L. West (1999); Finkelberg (2000); Janko (2000); Lord ([1960] 2000); Nagy (2000b); Dué (2001); Graziosi (2001), 248-250; Nagy (2001); Nardelli (2001). Much remains dependent on hypothesis and framing assumptions in lieu of direct evidence, but I find Nagy's evolutionary model for the fixation of the Homeric poems intuitively appealing within the limits of our evidence: this entails multiple, ongoing performance contexts within a hardening tradition that passes through a particular 'bottleneck' in 6th and 5th century BCE Athens: see esp. Nagy (1999b).

¹⁴⁴ Relevant here is the subtle discussion by Ingold (2000), 401-404, of writing 'as the graphic counterpart to speech'; note esp. 404: 'Since we speak ... with the whole body, and not just with the voice, the relation between speech and writing is not so much between a sonic reality and its visual representation as it is between the communicative bodily gesture and its graphic inscription.' The *bodily* practices (or disciplines) of speaking, hearing, writing and reading are entirely integral to communication on this understanding, as illustrated e.g. in the anecdote about the classicist who suggested that to 'know Greek' meant to be able to read Plato with your feet up by the fire; compare Bourdieu (1977), 93-94: 'Bodily *hexis* is political mythology realized, *embodied*, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable manner of standing, speaking, and thereby of *feeling* and *thinking*.'

¹⁴⁵ See Ingold (2000), 56-57, 208, 361.

¹⁴⁶ Ingold (2000), 56.

¹⁴⁷ See esp. Detienne ([1967] 1996), 39-52.

deals with the periodisation of the cosmos in starkly schematic terms.¹⁴⁸ But this process is also (if differently constituted, and competitively so) a rationale of the two archetypal manifestations of the Greek heroic past, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The epic past is not a separate world from the present, for all the differences of its constitution as 'then' and 'there' opposed to the 'now' and 'here' of performance; the epic past is instead what lies behind and beneath the world as it is now. Against such a backdrop, the Western concept of 'fiction' that so bedevils our understanding of what stories ('literature') are, is better conceived as a specific development in traditional story-telling.¹⁴⁹ Where all story-telling conducts attention deeper into the world, fiction is predicated upon a reflexive awareness of the (selective) framing inherent in this process, not as a limitation but as an opportunity for conscious manipulation of the direction of attention in this way. What results is the enactment of (fictional) worlds within the world, and fiction is thus an implicit claim about the potential of human imagination, which is to say, about the potential for humans to act intentionally in (partial) awareness of the modalities of their own 'dwelling' in the world.¹⁵⁰ But this activity is different from traditional story-telling only in a particular opportunistic attitude towards the process of framing brought into play as performers set about directing their attention into the world. By contrast, the Greek epic poet's recourse to the Muses claims to overcome this selectivity through the Muses' access to 'everything'.¹⁵¹ The poet's claim amounts to an implicit claim to 'truth' as *aletheia*, as unconcealment, even as the poet gives (inevitably) a selective account:¹⁵²

πληθὺν δ' οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι οὐδ' ὀνομήνω,
οὐδ' εἴ μοι δέκα μὲν γλῶσσαι, δέκα δὲ στόματ' εἶεν,
490 φωνὴ δ' ἄρρηκτος, χάλκεον δέ μοι ἦτορ ἐνείη·
εἰ μὴ Ὀλυμπιάδες Μοῦσαι, Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο

¹⁴⁸ Apart from the *Theogony* and *Works and Days*, note esp. the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, fr. 1, 204 MW, for the inscription of this periodisation into a genealogical, generational framework; cf. Fowler (1998).

¹⁴⁹ For fiction and the history of Greek verbal discourse, see esp. Finkelberg (1998), but Finkelberg sees a fundamental, teleological transition from a 'poetics of truth' to a 'poetics of fiction', where I would see a messier set of developments within a wider conception of story-telling; cf. the comments of Morgan (2000). Contrast Feeney (1991), 3: 'The problem of how to read gods in epic is a problem of fiction before anything else'.

¹⁵⁰ On imagination, see Ingold (2000), 417-418. Note also Scarry (1985), 167, for 'imagining as a boundary condition of intentionality'; and Kapferer (1997), 4-5: 'by intentionality I merely mean that human beings are directed toward the ever-shifting horizons of their existence ... the intentionality of human beings is a dynamic force of their being-in-the-world'. The imagination should not be opposed to the real: see Kapferer (1997), 231.

¹⁵¹ Esp. *Il.* 2.485: ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαὶ ἐστε, πάρεστε τε, ἴστέ τε πάντα.

¹⁵² *Il.* 2.488-492 (M. L. West (ed.) (1998-2000) deletes 2.491-492). On this invocation, see esp. Ford (1992), 72-73, 76-77.

θυγατέρες, μνησαίαθ' ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον.
 ἀρχοὺς αὖ νηῶν ἐρέω νῆας τε προπάσας.

Not even a prodigious multiplication of the organs of speech could overcome the selectivity of narration and naming without the 'memory' (μνησαίαθ') of the Muses, divine daughters of Zeus. But conversely, through this unconcealment of the past in the memory of the Muses, the epic poet finds access to the world as present in its past-ness, even as the exigencies of the poet's own practice impose limits in the telling.

This claim of access is strategic and competitive. Nagy's focus on the poet's performance underlines the competitive framework within which the narratives of Greek epic take shape, not least in the development of 'Panhellenic' epic traditions.¹⁵³ The competing 'world-views' that are generated by particular traditions of Greek epic poetry can be understood as reflections of this framework of poetic performance. As such, the narrative world-view of a particular epic performance is an integral *strategic* effect of the competitive poetic 'leading-out' into the world of a performer's and an audience's attention.¹⁵⁴ Such strategic effects are always implicit in the web of possibilities for significance that traditional poetry generates: such 'traditional referentiality', to use Foley's term, is a concomitant of the verbal texture of epic poetry.¹⁵⁵ Within this larger construct of traditional Greek poetry, the discrete story-traditions embodied in our texts of the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, *Theogony*, *Works and Days* and so on, amount to an institutionalisation, in increasingly distinct forms, of particular narratives that explore the world at various stages in the formation of the present in the past.¹⁵⁶ It is in this institutional sense that the Homeric epics as we have them constitute narrative explorations in poetic speech of the modalities and significance of being in a world with a heroic, 'epic', past.

If poetry like the Homeric epics offers explorations of being-in-the-world that amount to a process-experience, and thus cognition, of the past in the present of narration, how can this approach be focused more specifically in relation to the presence of gods in the world? A specific problem here concerns

¹⁵³ See Nagy ([1979] 1999), (1990).

¹⁵⁴ See Bowker (1995), 145: the multiplication of cosmologies within particular traditions reflects their contextual role, namely 'to display the cosmos as an arena of opportunity'.
¹⁵⁵ See esp. Foley (1991), (1997), (1999).

¹⁵⁶ See Nagy (1990), 60-61; compare the 'species of rhapsody' outlined by Pavese (1998), 84-86. Similarly, linguistic differences point to the generic conditioning of formal language within and between such traditions, and not the intrinsic earliness or lateness of given passages in their context, as has been argued e.g. in relation to similes; for this fundamental point, see Householder and Nagy (1972), 22-23; compare now Bakker (2001) on the augment in similes.

what often seems to be the most difficult aspect of putatively 'religious' discourse, namely the extent to which it invokes aspects of the world which 'violate people's ideas of what commonly takes place in their environment'.¹⁵⁷ The relevance of this question in the context of divine appearance is immediate: even if people regard divine presence as frequent in the world, the ways in which that presence is characterised are nonetheless at odds with what is otherwise 'normal'—that is what makes it something worthy of note. If, with Bourdieu, people misrecognise the limits of the organisation of their lives as 'natural', what are people doing when they cognise things as 'unnatural' in this way?¹⁵⁸

One recent trend in the study of religion approaches religious discourse with a particular focus on cognition.¹⁵⁹ Boyer in particular uses a combination of ethnographic material and cognitive theorising to explore the contention that religious discourse is compelling precisely because it is odd.¹⁶⁰ In Boyer's view, this oddness is not the result of the cultural 'distance' of observers from their subjects, or because religious discourse is inherently fantastical or cast in some mode of thought (or *mentalité*) that is definitively removed from the everyday; instead, 'when people develop non-intuitive, culturally-transmitted explicit conceptions of some non-observable domain of reality, they tend to create principles that go against their own intuitive principles'.¹⁶¹ 'Non-observable' might be better glossed as not *simply* observable, in line with the approach outlined above to the potential for *aletheia* or unconcealment offered by story-telling (but not only story-telling) as a way of directing attention deeper into the world. But it is key to Boyer's approach that these distinctively 'non-intuitive' elements function *alongside* 'normal' intuitive expectations, and as such are developed according to the same cognitive strategies which people put into

¹⁵⁷ Boyer (1994), 35.

¹⁵⁸ Bourdieu (1977), 97.

¹⁵⁹ See esp. Lawson and McCauley (1990); Boyer (1994); Sperber (1996); Andresen (ed.) (2001a). For an overview, see Andresen (2001b). There are important points of contact between this recent cognitive work on religion and the subtle discussions of Bowker (1973), (1978), but also crucial differences: see Bowker (1995); Flood (1999), 57-64. In classical studies, Lawson and McCauley (1990) and Boyer (1994) are noticed positively by Kearns (1999), 200, in the course of a review of Burkert (1996), which she describes as 'distinctly old-fashioned'. But Burkert's work is read among comparative religionists, not least for its attention to 'experience' turned into sociobiological heritage; thus Burkert (1996) is recommended by Boyer (2001), 381, and for a review symposium on Burkert (1996) in a comparative religion journal, see Braun (ed.) (1998); Saler (1999).

¹⁶⁰ Boyer (1994).

¹⁶¹ Boyer (1994), 112; cf. Sperber (1994), 55. Against the invocation of 'mentalities', note Lawson and McCauley (1990), 172, but see esp. Lloyd (1990).

play in the more mundane contexts of their lives.¹⁶² That is to say, alongside the base fact of anomaly and contradiction, the uses which people make of these anomalous elements actually serve to confirm their hermeneutic potential within people's ongoing experience of the world: people judge in their practice that these elements direct their attention *productively*. Boyer characterises the quasi-evolutionary survival of religious ideas in terms of an optimal tension: 'certain combinations of intuitive and counterintuitive claims constitute a cognitive optimum, in which a concept is both learnable and non-natural'.¹⁶³ This complex of the intuitive and the counterintuitive amounts to a practical logic with which to engage the complexity of being-in-the-world. Herein lies the ongoing vitality of religious discourse in human life, and its variable yet characteristic concern with aspects of reality beyond those normally accessible, not least beings whose powers extend far beyond the limits of normal human capacities.

What is especially significant to me in such an approach is that it need not formally implicate the question of where such anomalous conceptions take their ultimate starting-point, a question that otherwise recurs insistently as a means of either valorisation or derogation.¹⁶⁴ What Boyer in fact intends, as his recent popularisation of his academic work spells out, is the latter: to limit religion to the status of a by-product of human cognition.¹⁶⁵ But while the 'how'

¹⁶² Compare e.g. the conception of super-agents in anthropomorphic terms: Barrett and Keil (1996); Barrett (2001); Guthrie (2001).

¹⁶³ Boyer (1994), 121. Compare Lawson and McCauley (1990), 7-8; Sperber (1994), 54. See also Bowker (1973), 82: 'Precisely for this reason, the threats of implausibility are virtually coexistent with the actually projected ways through, and for this reason also the actions and words which surround, for example, burial, become deeply connected (ritualized) with possible supports of plausibility.' It is important to distinguish the quasi-evolutionary model of cultural transmission involved here from biological evolution; see Sperber (1985a), 31: 'Unlike genes, viruses, or bacteria, which normally reproduce, and only exceptionally undergo a mutation, mental representations have a basically unstable structure: the normal fate of an idea is to become altered or merge with other ideas; what is exceptional is the reproduction of an idea ... To put it differently, the strict reproduction of an idea should be seen as a limiting case: the degree zero of transformation.' Alternative approaches to human culture might stress the practice involved in cultural transmission: ideas are always encompassed by contexts of engagement, or, with Bowker (1995) and Flood (1999), 59, the specificity of human significance.

¹⁶⁴ Compare Lawson and McCauley (1990), 1: there are two central groups in the study of religion, one manifests 'awe in the presence of signals of transcendence', the other 'an irrelevant preoccupation with the derogation of the truth content of religious beliefs'; Lawson and McCauley seek an alternative; cf. Flood (1999), 32.

¹⁶⁵ Boyer (2001), 378: 'Whoever designed religion, or designs each religion, seems to have uncanny prescience of what will be successful with human minds. But there is of course no designer, and no conspiracy either. Religious concepts work that way, they realise the miracle of being exactly what people will transmit, simply because other variants were created and forgotten or abandoned along the way.' This amounts to a tautology.

of Boyer's cognitive epidemics explains religion as an integral part of cultural life, this cannot discount the myriad specific moments of human participation in the world: the autonomy of ongoing cultural life that Boyer argues can only be a relative autonomy, and it cannot rule out, for example, the possibility of specific points of (anomalous) contact between gods and mortals.¹⁶⁶ The ultimate origin, the 'real referent', of a given instance of religious discourse may potentially be located in divine revelation from on high, or in the historical contingency of the founder of a given cult, or in the 'subjective' psychological experiences of an individual, or in the creativity of a particular archaic Greek poet, or indeed in the existing cultural and social environment of a given group; yet, crucially, the cognitive processes with which people engage these aspects of their being-in-the-world are not as a consequence beyond reach. The 'origins' of religion are not something that needs to be accounted for in order to characterise religious discourse, regardless of how important such origins may be in particular cultural contexts, or indeed within the methodological framework of various approaches to the study of religion. As such, this is an approach to religious discourse that is not focused on 'religious experience' in an originary sense, conceived as an authorising external referent underlying any truly 'religious' religious discourse, but instead on the ways that people manage all their participation in the world. Gadamer's distinction between experience as residue and experience as process is reproduced once again.

This approach to religious discourse is grounded in the processes of living and telling in similar ways to the approach to Greek epic poetry that I outlined above. So what sort of an exploration of these anomalous ideas do the narratives of Greek epic offer? Narrative on this understanding offers not a representation of experience-as-residue, but experience-as-process in the very act of narration, in which both performers and audiences jointly participate in exploring sense and significance. In such narratives the counterintuitive aspects of religious discourse that Boyer has identified play a crucial role as evocations of structuring response, of making 'sense' as both perception and significance. The singularity of the counterintuitive is preserved as anti-structure within the overall structuration of experience that narrative comprises, in which poet and audience together lead out their attention into the world. I will go on in the second chapter of this thesis to consider the exploration of the presence of the

For criticism of such approaches as inadequate to the specificity of people's lives, see Bowker (1995), 98-107.

¹⁶⁶ Compare Bowker (1973), 16: '*a priori*, in behavioural terms alone, the possibility cannot be excluded that God is the origin of the sense of God—a possibility which to Tylor, Durkheim, and Freud was simply inadmissible'. See also Bowker (1995), 116.

gods in terms of this dynamic of structure and anti-structure—of making 'sense' (both perception and significance) and of being confronted by awareness of an inability to make 'sense'. Anti-structure does not mean a transcendent 'object' underlying religious phenomena and experience, as in the religious phenomenology of Otto and van der Leeuw, but instead a culturally framed point of engagement with the possibility of disruption in the world.¹⁶⁷ Prickett quotes one Johann Baptist Metz: "'The shortest definition of religion: interruption'".¹⁶⁸ A classicist might quote Solon as told by Herodotos: τὸ θεῖον πᾶν ἔδν φθονερόν τε καὶ παραχῶδες.¹⁶⁹ But compare also Gill: 'To recognize something as a center or originating event is not to locate a hierophany, a point of rupture, but to participate in a mode of human creativity'.¹⁷⁰ The sense of estrangement that such disruption carries with it is not a theme confined to encounters with gods, but wherever such estrangement arises the ramifications are potentially religious in their scope.¹⁷¹ It will be my contention at the close of the second chapter that *Iliad* 24 already explores such religious potential in the encounter between Akhilleus and Priamos: neither of them are gods, at least so far as their mortality hangs heavy over the entire exchange, but their encounter constitutes a moment of disruption within the overall story of the war that amounts to a mutual epiphany with a crucial role in the ending of the Iliadic narrative itself.

This focus on religious discourse, and story-telling in particular, is not intended as a displacement of other forms of religious activity in the world. Particular forms of activity are more and less central in relation to particular contexts and constraints of performability. For example, the physical structures of sanctuary sites, as specific shapings of the world in terms of human and divine that are realised in the landscape itself, constitute items of central importance in the institutional history of Greek religion, particularly insofar as they structure the territory of the city and its boundaries.¹⁷² Likewise, rituals of sacrifice, as carried out within the social environment of a particular city-state,

¹⁶⁷ R. Otto ([1917] 1950); van der Leeuw (1938). For a critique of this 'phenomenology of religion', see Flood (1999), 96-99.

¹⁶⁸ Prickett (2002), 261.

¹⁶⁹ Hdt. 1.32. Compare Redfield ([1975] 1994), 247, on the *Iliad*: 'Neither do we, as we stand with the poet, see the gods as fixed foundations; they are more like recurrent dilemmas.' For Solon's comment in context, see e.g. Lateiner (1989), 202-203; Arieti (1995), 50-51; Thompson (1996), 14-16; Romm (1998), 60-63; Harrison (2000), 35-37.

¹⁷⁰ S. Gill (1998b), 305.

¹⁷¹ See esp. Levinas ([1961] 1991), ([1986] 1998) for a transcendental ethics based on the phenomenology of the other.

¹⁷² See Kearns (1992); Alcock and Osborne (edd.) (1994).

are of particular importance as communal presentations of communication with the gods.¹⁷³ These activities are not, however, necessarily distinct qua 'religious' from, for instance, the 'imagined' versions of sacrifice that form a central obsession of fifth-century Athenian tragedy, even if they are distinct in the particular conditions of their performability. All are cultural expressions that could be called religious, and all are something that people really participate in, even if the modes of this participation take different forms. In particular, it is entirely feasible for one such expression to influence and shape another, as part of the continuum of cultural life. By way of illustration, compare for a moment Seaford's remark at the beginning of his *Reciprocity and Ritual* about a seemingly obvious difference between Greek poetry and Greek ritual, namely that '[t]he *Iliad* represents, but does not perform, the funeral of Patroklos'.¹⁷⁴ But just what does this distinction entail? Seaford's book is methodologically oriented around close reading of the 'performance' of ritual alongside the developing city-state's 'representation' of ritual in epic and tragedy; 'performance' and 'representation' specifically come together in the evolution of hero-cult, and ritual thus plays a fundamental role in the cohesion of society.¹⁷⁵ I would frame the problem differently, from a perspective that is both less teleological and less committed to a Durkheimian view of religion as a hypostasis of society: *Iliad* 23 does in some sense 'perform' the funeral of Patroklos, not in the terms of an opposition between performance and representation, but instead in the only way it is now possible to 'perform' the funeral of Patroklos (and not a *second* funeral of Patroklos). That is to say, it is not the performance of Patroklos's funeral in the specific sense of an event which took place in a particular place and time (on the plain of Troy generations ago), nor a representation in the specific sense that it simply replays this historical event; but it is itself an enactment of the funeral of Patroklos, in an exemplary form, created and expressed in the medium of traditional verbal performance (epic). Obviously such an exemplary funeral has conditions of performability distinct from, for example, those of an inscribed and carved cenotaph marking the death in battle of an individual Athenian in 394/393 BCE,

¹⁷³ See esp. Xenophon, *Hell.* 2.4.20-21; also Sourvinou-Inwood (1988); Sourvinou-Inwood (1990); Parker (1996).

¹⁷⁴ Seaford (1994), xiv.

¹⁷⁵ See e.g. Seaford (1994), 186-189. The interrelation of representation and performance through ritual is also fundamental to Seaford (ed.) (1996). This intense preoccupation with the cohesiveness of ritual gives a teleological bias to what might be better characterised in terms of dynamics; compare Seaford (1994), xiv: 'because ritual is the expression of cohesion and control, it always moves ... towards a positive conclusion'. But see Kapferer (1997), 287-297, for an exemplary discussion of the destructive potential in the ritual dynamics of power.

but the two may quite legitimately be read together: institutions like the Athenian *epitaphios agon* and *epitaphios logos* show us the potential for such 'historical' and 'mythical' religious activity to interact.¹⁷⁶ So too, the funeral of Patroklos as enacted in *Iliad* 23 may be read as a part of the broad continuum of Greek religion that encompasses the specific historical practices of ritual, so long as the specific contexts of performability are given appropriate consideration.¹⁷⁷ When it comes to religion the conceptual boundaries that are often set up around verbal discourse, and narrative ('literature') in particular, should be treated with caution in favour of an increased focus on the conditions of performability of any text or action, or any set thereof.



In this introduction, I have outlined some important aspects of the problem of reading epiphany as religious discourse. By setting aside questions of 'experience' or 'belief' as the primary legitimating factors in examining forms of religious expression, we can respond more fully to the specific challenges that the full variety of religious expression encompasses. In this light we might more profitably regard cognition (sensation, presence) and culture (significance, understanding, authority, commitment) jointly as potential problems *within* religious discourse, as inclusively conceived, rather than as criteria by which to delimit religious discourse as a category of exclusion. If 'epic epiphany' remained a recurrent conceptual frame for exploring and understanding the possibilities of divine presence in the face of changing circumstances, it did so as a legitimate part of the continuum of religious expression, and one that offered specific advantages in facilitating the exploration of exemplary issues of divine and mortal (co)existence within the world above and beyond those afforded by

¹⁷⁶ See Clairmont (1983), 209-212, nos 68a and 68b; and 219-221, no. 68A, for the Dexileos relief, and on the public commemoration of those who fell in this battle: the Dexileos relief constitutes 'a private memorial over a kenotaph beside the assumed existence of a public memorial'. Supposedly, the *epitaphios agon* at Athens was first instituted at the time of the Persian wars; see Clairmont (1983), 22-24 citing Diodorus 11.33.3; thus it would represent the adoption of a widespread 'mythical' model familiar from *Iliad* 23 in a newly institutionalised form. Against this, Loraux (1986a), 37, 53 n. 80, notes that the absence of a 'theology' of battle in the Athenian *epitaphioi logoi* is a marked point of discontinuity, with one (minor) exception in Lysias *Epitaphios* 58.

¹⁷⁷ For such caution about Patroklos's funeral in terms of contexts of performability, compare Clairmont (1983), 7.

other forms of religious expression. The creativity of processes of understanding, telling and acting, is, according to this view, fundamental to religious activity, and not a distortion of 'pure experience'. Religious concepts, experiences, practices, and the conceptualisation of the relations of gods with humans in the world, are all created and creative in this sense, despite the differing performance constraints that may be operating in particular cases. Accordingly, the dynamic relationship between 'historical' and 'imaginative' forms of religious representation becomes explainable as that between different instances of a more general process of articulating how the world might be.

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2. Sense and presence: relating divine epiphany in Homer

Questions relative to God are not resolved by answers in which the interrogation ceases to resonate or is wholly pacified.

Levinas, *Of God Who Comes to Mind*.

The unanswerable question Kierkegaard repeatedly asks is, How can the other speak and be heard without ceasing to be other?

M. C. Taylor, *About Religion*.

First steps

In approaching divine epiphany in Homer, first steps are significant. Much has been written before now about the gods in Homer; much has depended upon the chosen frame of investigation. Questions of how to read Homer's gods have been raised in acute forms at least since Xenophanes and Herodotos, and such questions have had fundamental effects. Are we to read Homer's gods as part of a literary genealogy, or as a chapter in the history of religions, or again as reflecting a stage in the emergent psychology of the Greeks (and by implication, Western civilisation), or as what?¹ It is perhaps unsurprising that, despite the deep familiarity of the Homeric material, the gods and their

¹ For early readers of Homer's gods, see e.g. Hdt. 2.53 with R. Thomas (2000), 274-281, and Xenophanes: see below, p. 105 n. 225. More broadly, see Pfeiffer (1968), 3-15; Lamberton (1986), 10-48; Feeney (1991), 5-56.

modalities have remained intensely contested topics.² In the previous chapter I argued that we should dispense with certain assumptions that have underpinned discussion of narratives of divine appearance, in particular the recourse to 'experience' as an evaluative touch-stone. A point I make there should be underlined: narratives of gods and mortals in the Homeric poems are not representations that stand or fall by their putative relationship with some form of experience 'out there'; they are realisations or enactments of the gods that are experiences in themselves.³ The operative model of poet and audience that I want to stress is one of active participation in an imaginative and experiential project. In this chapter I will shift the focus of my attention onto the Homeric text itself and explore the consequences for reading Homer's gods that stem from this approach.

Above all, I do not want to approach 'divine epiphany' as if it were a self-evident category of investigation, especially of typological investigation. The dominant conceptual approach to divine appearances in Homer is typological, as influentially formulated by Pfister.⁴ Insofar as the disruption that such appearances bring with them is acknowledged, it is naturalised by Pfister within frames of similarity and regularity as a complication of narrative genre and the differential degrees of distortion and creativity that these entail. The cross-cultural and diachronic comparative approach of Pfister is a common one in the study of ancient religion, but the terms in which the investigation is framed—similarity, repetition, typology—are question-begging.⁵ Two sections of Richardson's commentary on the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* exemplify this

² Compare e.g. the 'aesthetic' issues raised in comparing or contrasting the Homeric gods and more 'monstrous' NE material: for an older version, see Murray (1934), 120-145; more recently Griffin (1980), 172-178, joined the fray singling out for criticism Kirk (1970); Griffin received a stout rejoinder in Lynn-George (1982), esp. 243-244. Compare Griffin (1977) for a similar vision of Homer as aesthetically distinct from the epic cycle; there too he downplays what monstrousness there is in Homer. By contrast, the Homeric poems arguably depend upon these 'others' as the background against which monstrous traces must be understood, as both allusive presence and elusive absence (the importance of these traces was underlined to me by Michael Clarke); for a related set of arguments modifying Homer's 'uniqueness' in terms of a relative opposition of local and Panhellenic, see Nagy ([1979] 1999), 7-8 §14n4; Nagy (1990a), 122-142; Nagy (1990b), 71-72 and n. 99.

³ See above, pp. 34-46.

⁴ Pfister (1924); cf. above, pp. 21-23.

⁵ On the importance of *difference* to comparative studies, see J. Z. Smith (1982), 35: 'We are left with the dilemma shrewdly stated by Wittgenstein: "But isn't *the same* at least the same? ..." Comparison requires the postulation of difference as the grounds of it being interesting (rather than tautological) and a methodical manipulation of difference, a playing across the "gap" in the service of some useful end.' On Smith's comparativism, see S. Gill (1998a); Urban (2000).

approach in a striking form, in which he blends insights gained from the morphological study of Homeric type-scenes together with the typologies of the characteristics of divine epiphany drawn up by Pfister.⁶ The persistence of such models is marked. Even Vernant, in the midst of a fundamental article about the disconcerting 'superbody' of the gods, and directly after observing that there is no 'single standard scenario' for divine apparitions, nevertheless feels the need to 'venture a typological schema of the forms assumed by the gods when they make corporeal appearances'.⁷ I will consider in greater detail below some of the uncertainties that arise in relation to category-based approaches. My basic point is that from the start such strategies are aimed at delimiting divine epiphany as a discrete, identifiable event, within the twin frames of characteristic typology and the patterning of type-scene analysis. As such, possibilities for disruption, non-regularity and the unusual are contained from the outset. But the problem of 'divine epiphany' is not least a question about interruption of mundane frames of reference, about counterintuitive aspects of the world and about the recognition of such possibilities.⁸ The set of relations that is informed by the opposition human/divine, in Homer no less than in various other areas of Greek cultural activity, is predicated upon going beyond mortal, mundane frames.⁹ The potential for the presence and activity of gods to disrupt mortal existence is a fundamental aspect of this relationship and the annihilating thunderbolt of Zeus is one of its most prominent tropes.¹⁰ The question is how to frame discussion so as not to foreclose this disruptive potential.

In adopting as a frame 'divine epiphany', one thing at least seems to be implied, namely that a basic question will be about divine presence. But specifically what this divine presence might be thought to be, how it might be manifested, how it might be recognised, are questions that immediately complicate the basic terrain. Such questions are fundamental problems in relation to the boundaries of what we might consider 'epiphany' to be. Our responses to them have specific consequences for the studies which result. For example, some have followed Nilsson in the attempt to reduce questions of divine presence to a function of certain (disputed) aspects of human motivation

⁶ Richardson (ed.) (1974), 207-211 and 252-256.

⁷ Vernant ([1986] 1991a), 42.

⁸ Recall again the quotation, by Prickett (2002), 261, of one Johann Baptist Metz: "'The shortest definition of religion: interruption'". For the counter-intuitive in religious discourse, see above, pp. 40-41.

⁹ See esp. Vernant ([1986] 1991a).

¹⁰ See below, pp. 150 n. 420.

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and decision-making.¹¹ For others Homeric epiphany is evidence for the historical development of early Greek religious experience.¹² Some have adopted a focus more closely restricted to the internal parameters of the Homeric text and how the gods function in relation to the narrative and thematic structure of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.¹³ Others have focused in detail on the mechanisms of divine appearance and disguise in the Homeric poems.¹⁴ Needless to say, there is overlap among these approaches. I would emphasise one relatively recent approach in which the appearances of the Homeric gods are signs to be read and interpreted in ways similar to those deployed in contexts of omens and divination.¹⁵ The stress on active hermeneutics in this orientation, and on the *processes* of reading, both internal and external to the epic itself, is a key feature that I will develop in relation to the presence and activity of the gods within the Homeric poems.

Amid all this scholarly work certain choices have had pervasive effects on the investigation of divine epiphany. As J. Z. Smith writes: 'For a student of religion concerned with generic matters, choice is everything'.¹⁶ In the first section of this chapter, I will consider two approaches that are broadly representative of the strategies adopted in relation to divine appearances, in order to highlight the centrality of the problems that I have posed above, namely what divine presence might be thought to be, how it might be manifested, how it might be recognised. The approaches I examine take their start from different but related points, one from a categorical proposition about what a divine epiphany is, the other from a particular instance of what divine

¹¹ In the wake of Jørgensen (1904) and Nilsson (1924), much work continues or disputes this line of discussion: see particularly Dodds (1951), 14ff.; Snell (1953); Lesky (1961); Nilsson (1968), vol. 1, 218-219; Tsagarakis (1980); Hooker (1990); Hammer (1998). For overview, see Graf (1991).

¹² See recently Dietrich (1994); Burkert (1997); Dietrich (1997). For epiphany in Minoan contexts, see e.g. Hägg (1983), (1986). Analogous to this approach is the role the gods have played in analytic criticism as indexes of compositional layers: see the critique by Calhoun (1937).

¹³ See now Pucci (2002); other notable discussions include Ehnmark (1934); Ehnmark (1939), 3-69; Schrade (1952); Chantraine (1954); Otto (1954); Kullmann (1956); Whitman (1958), 221-248; Severyns (1966); Lesky (1968), esp. 725-740; Tsagarakis (1977); Griffin (1980); Clay (1983); Schein (1984), 45-66; Emlyn-Jones (1992); Redfield ([1975] 1994), 225-247; Heiden (1997).

¹⁴ Particularly useful are Kullmann (1956); Willcock ([1970] 1978b); Richardson (ed.) (1974), 207-211, 252-256; Clay (1974); Fauth (1975); Bushnell (1982); Dietrich (1983); Pucci ([1985] 1998d); Murnaghan (1987); Pucci (1987); Pucci ([1988] 1998b); W. Smith (1988); Pelliccia (1995), 77ff., 273ff. On the related question of gods as birds, see below, pp. 136-137.

¹⁵ See particularly Willcock ([1970] 1978b); Bushnell (1982); Pucci ([1985] 1998d); Pucci (1986); Murnaghan (1987); Pucci (1987); Pucci ([1988] 1998b); C. G. Thomas (1996).

¹⁶ J. Z. Smith (1987), xi-xii.

epiphany is taken to be. In this examination I want to stress the problematic consequences that stem from occlusion of the questions that I have highlighted above: too often questions about divine presence, its modalities and its manifestations are assumed to possess fairly self-evident parameters. In my view, this is far from being the case.

From this starting point I will move on to consider in greater depth the focal questions that I have outlined above. Each of these questions directs attention in a certain way at the modalities of divine presence in the Homeric poems. Central to my analysis is the capability of language to express ideas and images in relational terms and thus to embody things and states which elude expression in more straightforward denominational terms. But this relational language functions precisely in a communicative context: Homeric poetry is speech and as such involves the active participation of audiences in the frames within which such ideas and images are to be understood and gain significance. I want to draw particular attention to how the presentation of divine presence in Homer repays closer attention to how things are told, to whom and by whom. The potential difference of various vantage-points in and on the text—narrators, characters and audiences—is particularly important in the play of divine presence. The critical focus directed towards such issues in narratology offers important insights, since this approach is entirely oriented towards questions of placement and perception: inequality of perspectives between the various internal and external participants in the text/narrative/story is a central dynamic.¹⁷ As Lowe points out, a narratological perspective puts a particular emphasis on reading as a hermeneutic activity.¹⁸ It seems to me that it is vital to carry over this emphasis into the reading of divine appearances to allow for the complex emergence in a given narrative of multiple perspectives, each of which is not the 'whole story' and thus holds out the possibility of being supplemented. These twin prospects of incompleteness and supplementarity are crucial to the investigation of divine epiphany in the Homeric text.

¹⁷ I do not make systematic use of (any particular) narratological terminology, but note Genette ([1983] 1988), 8: 'the mechanics of narratology ... at its best is distinguished by a respect for the mechanisms of the text.' For narratology and Homer, see de Jong (1987), (2001); and esp. Lowe (2000) with his game-like model of narrative. On the figure(s) of narrator/poet, see S. Richardson (1990); Doherty (1995); Rabel (1997). On the basic distinction between narrator- and character-speech, esp. in the case of Akhilleus, see e.g. Whitman (1958); A. Parry (1972); Reeve (1973); Griffin (1986); de Jong (1988); Martin (1989); de Jong (1992); Crotty (1994); de Jong (1997).

¹⁸ See Lowe (2000), 12-14.

From the outset, then, a basic caution about delimitation and categorisation informs my approach to questions of divine presence and its modalities in the Homeric poems. In place of an emphasis on things and characteristic typologies, I prefer to think in terms of process and structuration. Narrative is an obvious process to consider in relation to accounts of divine interaction with mortals. But, more than this, as I have argued in the previous chapter, my interest in narrativisation of gods and their appearances lies in the particular facility that narratives possess for exploring—that is to say, for realising, objectifying, and one may even say ‘creating’—beyond-human aspects of human being-in-the-world. Such realisations of gods-in-the-world may be startling at the moments of their creation; but they may also constitute a compelling set of images within ongoing contexts of cultural transmission and inculcation of the ‘sense’ of presence.¹⁹ The afterlife of Homeric epic, and ‘epic epiphany’, bears eloquent witness to this.



Epiphany as category and paradigm?

I suggested above that if one thing is implicated in a consideration of divine epiphany in Homer it is the question of divine presence. But what such presence might be, how it might be manifested, and how it might be recognised are questions that are much less self-evident. In order to explore the implications that certain choices might have for this problematic, I want to consider two approaches to divine epiphany: one starts from a categorical proposition; the other begins from a particular instance. Both are respectable methods; both yield results. But I want to suggest that there are ways in which each of these

¹⁹ Compare Bourdieu (1977), 124: ‘... the *socially informed body*, with all its tastes and distastes, its compulsions and repulsions, with, in a word, all its *senses* ... [including] what might be called the *sense of limits and the legitimate transgression of limits*, which is at once the basis of the ordering of the world ... and of the ritual actions intended to authorize or facilitate the necessary or unavoidable breaches of that order.’

From the outset, then, a basic caution about delimitation and categorisation informs my approach to questions of divine presence and its modalities in the Homeric poems. In place of an emphasis on things and characteristic typologies, I prefer to think in terms of process and structuration. Narrative is an obvious process to consider in relation to accounts of divine interaction with mortals. But, more than this, as I have argued in the previous chapter, my interest in narrativisation of gods and their appearances lies in the particular facility that narratives possess for exploring—that is to say, for realising, objectifying, and one may even say ‘creating’—beyond-human aspects of human being-in-the-world. Such realisations of gods-in-the-world may be startling at the moments of their creation; but they may also constitute a compelling set of images within ongoing contexts of cultural transmission and inculcation of the ‘sense’ of presence.¹⁹ The afterlife of Homeric epic, and ‘epic epiphany’, bears eloquent witness to this.



Epiphany as category and paradigm?

I suggested above that if one thing is implicated in a consideration of divine epiphany in Homer it is the question of divine presence. But what such presence might be, how it might be manifested, and how it might be recognised are questions that are much less self-evident. In order to explore the implications that certain choices might have for this problematic, I want to consider two approaches to divine epiphany: one starts from a categorical proposition; the other begins from a particular instance. Both are respectable methods; both yield results. But I want to suggest that there are ways in which each of these

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approaches might in practice have served to conceal some important points about the modalities of divine presence.

In the first scenario, the investigative approach takes its start, whether implicitly or explicitly, from a categorical observation: 'an epiphany is [fill in desired characteristics]'. Hooker at one point spells out the subtext of much written on epiphany when he refers to 'an appearance with the properties of terror and wonder that make it a true epiphany'²⁰ The phrase used by Hooker here, 'true epiphany', recurs in similar forms: compare Kullmann's 'eigentliche Epiphanie'.²¹ This impulse to frame investigation in terms of typologies or taxonomies is a common one in the history of the study of religious materials, due in part—perhaps perversely—to the fact that such materials often display features which seem at first glance to blur or transgress categorical boundaries. Categorisation and typology in such contexts is the exertion of control over disruptive and disorienting material.²² Scholarly writing about Greek religion is no exception, and it is frequently framed from the outset by a delimitation of its subject matter in categorical terms. To cite just one recent example, itself a very useful study of a relatively neglected area, consider Larson's recent book on Greek nymphs: 'In order to be able to discuss the roles and functions of nymphs in Greek culture, we must be able to distinguish them from other, similar figures.'²³ Thus Larson's first chapter is entitled 'What is a nymph?', and is framed in ontological and taxonomic terms. Yet, despite the admitted fact that the material Larson is scrutinising renders problematic the delineation of a taxonomy of 'nymph', the categorical task itself is not held up to scrutiny.²⁴ A basic question that must be confronted in just such a case is whether a term like *νύμφη*, which is used across a range of religious, sexual and social contexts, should be understood in the first instance as denoting a taxonomic category at all.²⁵ One might instead confront its larger range of usage and meaning, and how it operates in a fashion that is more relational than denominative, as an

²⁰ Hooker (1990), 32: 'Hardly has the poem begun than Apollo appears in answer to Chryses' prayer: an appearance with the properties of terror and wonder that make it a true epiphany'.

²¹ Kullmann (1956), 93: 'Wenn wir jetzt zu der eigentlichen Epiphanie der Götter kommen, ist es vor allem notwendig, über die Gestalt zu sprechen, in der die Götter unter den Menschen erscheinen'.

²² Compare a recent comment by Andresen (2001b), 12: 'As with religious experience in general, some authors attempt to typologize mystical experiences, though many of these typologies appear somewhat arbitrary, based on limited observation'. See above, p. 7 n. 6, on the categorical problem presented by 'religion' itself.

²³ Larson (2001), viii.

²⁴ See Larson (2001), 3-8.

²⁵ See esp. Winkler (1990), 181ff.; also Calasso (2001), 30-34.

actively relating and 'ordering' term to be used with performative force in response to contextually specific needs.

The case is similar with divine epiphany. Even Pietro Pucci, who has been particularly anxious in his work to stress the potential for 'reticence' in the depiction of divine appearances in Homer, adopts from the start a normative definition of epiphany as 'the unexpected self-revelation of a god by means of shapes and signs that are recognizable and identifiable to a human being who is wide awake', a definition which both determines the contours of his own discussion of epiphany and sets out exclusionary boundaries in respect of what material it is legitimate to consider.²⁶ Behind such definitions is a scholarly genealogy that goes back at least to the treatment by Pfister of epiphany in terms of a descriptive typology of the generic and characteristic forms through which the appearance of gods is articulated.²⁷ A categorical and typological perspective of this sort has the double effect of foregrounding some and excluding other clusters within the potential body of material that might be brought to bear on the question of divine epiphany.

This genealogy may also encompass the investigation of oral-poetic type-scenes in Homer. Here the 'divine visitation' has a place, specifically in reference to the not infrequently attested rhythm of divine motivation and preparation, journey from Olympos, arrival, communication and departure.²⁸ I

²⁶ The definition continues, Pucci ([1985] 1998d), 71, n.3: 'I thus exclude dreams, oracles, divine manifestations such as thunder, any divine presence or companionship that is constant or potentially constant (as when Circe becomes the lover of Odysseus), and miraculous or magical visions of gods (like that which Athena makes possible for Diomedes) that are not self-revelations'. More recently, Pucci (1994), 15, in weaker terms: 'when the divine beings intervene among mortals and are perceived as being there (epiphany)'.

²⁷ That this focus on 'true' or 'eigentlich' epiphany goes back in form if not in terminology to Pfister (1924) (who is singled out by Kullmann (1956), 93 n. 3) seems clear from how Pfister concludes his terminological discussion after surveying of the history of the word ἐπιφάνεια in Greek, col. 281: 'In diesem Artikel gebrauchen wir also das Wort E., dem bei uns wohl meist üblichen Sprachgebrauch folgend, in etwas engerem Sinne als die Griechen das Wort ἐπιφάνεια, nämlich für diejenige Form der göttlichen Offenbarung, bei der das übermenschliche Wesen, ein Gott, ein Heros, ein Totengeist persönlich sichtbar unter den Menschen erscheint'. Other discussions of 'epiphany' in the Greek context have taken fuller account of the usage of the Greek term, ἐπιφάνεια, though it is non-classical in its 'religious' senses: see e.g. Pax (1955), and Pax (1962), but Pax adopts the terms 'totale' and 'partielle Epiphanie' to divide up the field once again. Versnel (1987) discusses the issue with clarity; note esp. 52: 'the term *epiphaneia* denotes two things: the personal appearance of a god and his miraculous deeds ... the two aspects of one indissoluble unity, of which now the one, then the other may dominate the description'.

²⁸ For 'divine visitation' as type-scene, see Edwards (1992), 309-310, with bibliography. See also Pucci ([1988] 1998b), 87-88. The study of type-scenes was begun in earnest by

raised earlier one particular example of the specific integration of Pfister's typology with type-scene analysis of this sort, in the form of Richardson's notes on the first and second 'epiphany' scenes in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*.²⁹ Within such type-scene analysis, basic schemas emerge in contexts of 'divine visitation'.³⁰ The structure of this particular schema involves movement from Olympos to the mortal world, and accordingly it seems already designed to suit considerations of divine epiphany that make capital out of the play of intrusion in instances of divine appearance, a god entering the mortal sphere. What such a schema does is to focus questions of divine presence along certain corporeal lines, since it is an adaption on both conceptual and linguistic levels of more general schemes of movement, arrival and communication within the mortal world, and it is not perhaps surprising that such schemes of divine visitation are not commensurate with the range of material that might be considered in relation to divine presence and its manifestations. There is in fact a significant issue concealed in this seemingly uncontroversial play of movement and intrusion. While it is possible to cite instances of divine appearances to mortals that are articulated in corporeal terms closely related to the mortal corporeal code, other instances make much freer play with the relationship between the presence of the gods and the 'body' of the gods.³¹ The temptation is to focus on those instances which seem to give the fullest version of the scheme and to reify them into an essential type from which all others derive by subtraction, whether in terms of a less coherent mapping together of corporeality, form and presence, or in terms of the simple omission of stages or features that appear within the schema in other places. But this temptation should be resisted.³² Most notably, what such schemes overlooks is the central problem of corporeality and perception in contexts of divine presence, as a direct result of adapting schemes that apply to situations where the parameters of mortal corporeal presence are a given and never a problem. Consequently, the possibilities for gestures towards transcendence within such a model are reduced to an extra set

Arend (1933), but without the benefit of Parry's work on orality in Homer: see Parry ([1936] 1970b). Among recent work, see esp. Foley (1990), ch. 7; Foley (1999), esp. ch. 6; and now, with a cognitive emphasis, Minchin (2001), esp. 32-72.

²⁹ N. Richardson (ed.) (1974), 207-211 and 252-256; cf. above, pp. 48-49.

³⁰ Compare e.g. Sowa (1984), 251; Flückiger-Guggenheim (1984), 11-12; García (2002), 15.

³¹ On divine corporeality, see below, pp. 93-125.

³² On the methodological status of type-scenes, see esp. Nagler (1974). For the dangers of reifying types and patterns in such contexts, see Dickson (1990), esp. 66-69; and Edwards (1997), 274, on the particular value of Nagler's approach in terms of Gestalt: it 'is a very salutary reminder that whether in the case of formulae, type-scenes, or story patterns, one must beware of the tendency to identify one form (perhaps the commonest) as a model or prototype upon which the others are based'. Compare also Foley (1999), 83-84: the units of type-scene analysis are 'pliable multiforms', not memorized data.

of definable characteristics which apparently evidence the 'supernatural', and these characteristics are more or less superimposed onto more familiar mortal corporeally-articulated schemes of journey, arrival and communication.³³ The impulse towards reification tends to obscure what is revealed by more sensitive analyses of the Homeric text in terms of type-scenes, or type-scene-like structures. Compare, for instance, Minchin's recent 'script' analysis: often what is of most interest in the functioning of scripts is their disruption—'how novel developments in the narrative routine may be achieved when script-based expectations are not met'.³⁴ It seems crucial to me to formulate an approach to divine epiphany that addresses more centrally the rhetoric that surrounds the presence of the gods and its manifestations, namely that the gods exceed and overflow normal bounds—that they transcend mortal frames.

To put a particular example to the test, I wonder how Pucci, for instance, would prefer to categorise Athene's spectacular descent in *Iliad* 4, given how strictly he circumscribes 'divine epiphany' in the definition I have quoted above. The descent of the goddess in this passage is like a shooting star or meteor, and it provokes amazement in both Greeks and Trojans alike and a general response as if to an omen.³⁵

- βῆ δὲ κατ' Οὐλύμποιο καρήνων αἶξασα.
 75 οἶον δ' ἀστέρα ἦκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω
 ἢ ναύτησι τέρας ἢ στρατῶι εὐρεί λαῶν,
 λαμπρόν, τοῦ δέ τε πολλοὶ ἀπὸ σπινθήρες ἴενται,
 τῶι εἰκυῖ' ἦιξεν ἐπὶ χθόνα Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη,
 κὰδ δ' ἔθορ' ἐς μέσσον· θάμβος δ' ἔχεν εἰσορόωντας
 80 Τρῳάς θ' ἵπποδάμους καὶ ἐὺκνήμιδας Ἀχαιοῦς.
 ὦδε δέ τις εἶπεσκεν ἰδὼν ἐς πλησίον ἄλλον·
 " ἦ ῥ' αὖτις πόλεμος τε κακὸς καὶ φύλοπις αἰνὴ
 ἔσσεται, ἦ φιλότῃτα μετ' ἀμφοτέροισι τίθησιν
 Ζεὺς, ὅς τ' ἀνθρώπων ταμὴς πολέμοιο τέτυκται; "
 85 ὥς ἄρα τις εἶπεσκεν Ἀχαιῶν τε Τρώων τε.

This spectacular descent is the first step that Athene takes as she provokes Pandarus into breaking the truce; she will perform this subsequent action disguised as Laodokos without any moment of self-revelation. Is this

³³ As e.g. N. Richardson (ed.) (1974), 208, esp. 252: '1. Supernatural stature and appearance. 2. Loss of old age. 3. Beauty "breathed around". 4. Divine fragrance from the goddess's clothes. 5. Divine radiance from her body, filling the house like lightning. 6. Hair flowing down over her shoulders. 7. Fear and speechlessness of the onlooker.' See also Severyns (1966), 33-43, for a similar list of characteristics.

³⁴ See Minchin (2001), 45-49; quotation on 49.

³⁵ *Il.* 4.74-85.

spectacular descent an epiphany? It is not exactly in line with the terms of Pucci's definition, with its stress on self-revelation, recognizability and identification, for all that it is certainly unexpected. Athene's descent is apparently perceived by the watching Greeks and Trojans 'like' a semantically ambivalent wonder, whose precise import they can refine only down to the alternative possibilities of war or peace.³⁶ This sequence reveals a certain slide of perception across the putative boundary of the simile itself: the meteor is a τέρας in the terms of the simile; but it is also precisely as a τέρας that the Trojans and Greeks read it ambivalently in the following lines.³⁷ Yet if all this is so, why then is this passage brought up in relation to divine epiphany in Homer? Richardson, for example, explicitly cites this passage in considering 'the two main points [arrival and departure] at which deities tend to reveal themselves'.³⁸ This is not just a scholarly reaction: the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* adopts a similarly meteoric mode in describing the god's epiphany at his temple.³⁹ The question remains: is this an epiphany or not?

At least two specific issues are critical here. In the first place, how 'deliberate' is this particular appearance of Athene? It is the implication of both Richardson's formulation above ('tend to reveal themselves') and Pucci's definition of divine epiphany ('unexpected self-revelation') that divine intentionality and agency are defining components of divine epiphany. But it is also true that there are instances of divine presence recognised by mortals where the modes of revelation cast a degree of ambivalence over how intentional, or how reflexively acted out, 'self-revelation' might be taken to be: the 'leakage' of Aphrodite's divine body in *Iliad* 3 in the gaze of Helene and the curious traces of Poseidon's divinity that Aias son of Oileos recognises at the beginning of *Iliad* 13 are two notable examples.⁴⁰ Just so, on one reading of the text in this present instance, the power and speed of Athene's descent seem to have created their own atmospheric effects. There are other possible instances which might be considered in this connection, such as the lengthy sequence of divine-mortal interactions that occur in *Iliad* 5 in the wake of Athene's removal of the mist from Diomedes' eyes. It is as if to avoid such complications that Pucci specifically excludes this sequence from his consideration of epiphany: for

³⁶ *Il.* 4.82-84.

³⁷ Compare de Jong (1987), 134: 'it appears that the descent is also focalized by the Greek and Trojan soldiers'.

³⁸ N. Richardson (ed.) (1974), 208, on 188-190.

³⁹ *HomHymnAp.* 440-445; see Allen and Sikes (edd.) (1904), on *HomHymnAp.* 441, 442.

⁴⁰ Aphrodite and Helene: *Il.* 3.383-446. The departure of Poseidon from the two Aiases: *Il.* 13.62-82. On these, see below, pp. 112-119. For 'leakage', cf. Lateiner (1995), 84.

Pucci this sequence is in the realm of the 'magical' or 'miraculous', not of the epiphanic.⁴¹ But what could it signify for a god to be involved in an unintentional 'epiphany'? Just as the sequence of encounters in *Iliad* 5 explores the possible modes of interaction between mortals and gods in unexpected ways that I will discuss later, so here too the notion of a more or less unintended 'epiphany' can be understood to cast a valuably different perspective on the modalities of divine presence in the Homeric poems.

In the second place, it is unclear to what extent the events involved in Athene's descent have been recognised by the Greeks and Trojans as resulting from the presence of a god at all. Is it possible to imagine that an 'epiphany' might go more or less unrecognised as such? In certain respects this example possesses characteristics that are central to the descriptive typologies of epiphany as a phenomenon, especially in the reaction of profound astonishment, *θάμβος*, among the Greeks and Trojans, and in its description as a form of bright light.⁴² But Athene's visible descent is not explicitly recognised either as Athene or as a god by the Greeks and Trojans. It is useful to compare various scholarly reactions; consider what Kullmann thinks this passage reveals about Homer:⁴³

Das entscheidend Homerische ist, daß die göttliche Epiphanie nicht mit der meteorologischen Erscheinung gleichgesetzt, sondern nur mit ihr verglichen wird. Der ursprüngliche Glaube wird dagegen jede derartige meteorologische Erscheinung als Epiphanie eines Gottes haben.

This observation, whatever else might be said about its take on the relationship between epiphany and meteorological phenomena, has the specific virtue of raising the question of comparison, as against identification, in the case of a god's presence: in Kullmann's view, Homer opts for comparison of the god with a star over the presumably less sophisticated mode of identifying the god as a star. But Kullmann does not consider how this distinction might operate in relation to the different perspectives that the Greeks and Trojans and the audience of the epic have on the event. Dietrich, by contrast, does raise the

⁴¹ See above, p. 54 n. 26.

⁴² For the association of *θάμβος* and epiphanies, see esp. Pfister (1924), col. 317; also Ehnmark (1934), 16-18; Clay (1983), 167ff.; Constantinidou (1994), 11-12; Lateiner (1995), 45-46. For 'light' as a feature of epiphany, see esp. D. Bremer (1975), 5-7; Brenk (1994); compare e.g. *Od.* 19.33-43, with Rose (1951); Pfeiffer ([1956] 1960); Burkert (1997).

⁴³ Kullmann (1956), 90-91. Compare Stockinger (1959), 20 n. 15; also Müllder (1930), 28-29, on *Od.* 3.382-384 and *Il.* 10.292-294, for another distinction in terms of Volksglaube, this time between the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

central issue of perception, though he rather elides from view the fact that the description is cast initially in the form of a simile:⁴⁴

Homer can describe divine epiphanies in the form of natural phenomena which are perceived as such by the people ... Although the goddess assumed the appearance of the Trojan hero Laodocus before addressing Pandarus, there is no doubt that the epiphany itself occurred in the form of a bright star as which she was seen descending from the sky.

But, interestingly, Dietrich's observation that 'Homer can describe divine epiphanies in the form of natural phenomena which are perceived as such by the people' seems to imply that any epiphany as such here ('the epiphany itself') occurs more for the audience than for the Greeks and Trojans who in Dietrich's view perceive Athene's descent as a 'natural phenomenon'.⁴⁵ If this is to be called an 'epiphany' in the sort of terms that Pucci adopts, would it not be necessary to be more clear about precisely for whom this is to be the case? In a similar fashion, it remains unclear whether Richardson has considered exactly who is party to this revelation, even as he assimilates this example into his schema as an instance of divine self-revelation. If, with Pucci, we were to foreground recognisability and identification as criteria for epiphany, then the question must be added, recognisability and identification for whom? In this example, at least, questions such as these are more complex than the appeal to self-revelation, recognizability and identification as a defining criteria might initially suggest.

Still, something that is at least akin to 'epiphany' seems to be taking place here, as Richardson and others suggest.⁴⁶ Of particular importance in this respect is how the narrator specifically identifies the presence of the goddess for the audience of the epic. Comparison might be made with Athene's appearance as a rainbow in *Iliad* 17;⁴⁷ or again with the appearance of Apollo near the Greek camp in *Iliad* 1, which Hooker, for instance, calls a 'true epiphany' despite the fact that there is no immediate witness or recognition of this appearance other than the narrator and the external audience of the epic.⁴⁸ But in this meteoric instance the audience are in fact in a position to answer the interpretative

⁴⁴ Dietrich (1983), 56.

⁴⁵ The designation 'natural', with its overtones of objectivity, is not helpful in such a context; what the Greeks and Trojans see is in fact a *τέρας*, a phenomenon of a very different order within a very different frame of reference. Alongside Dietrich's glossing of this as 'natural', note what Kullmann implies with his 'meteorology'.

⁴⁶ Compare Kirk (ed.) (1985), on *Il.* 4.78-84.

⁴⁷ Athene as portentous rainbow: *Il.* 17.547-552; this is compared with Athene as star by Kirk (ed.) (1985), on *Il.* 4.78-84.

⁴⁸ Apollo as plague-bearer: *Il.* 1.43-52; see Hooker (1990), 32; cf. above, p. 53 n. 20.

dilemma verbalised by the Greeks and Trojans in response to what they can see of the goddess's presence, since the audience have already been told what Zeus and Athene intend. In this way, Athene's spectacular descent invites responses from all present, but responses that are based on differently privileged degrees of perception. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the 'epiphany', such as it is in this passage, resides in this complex of interpretative responses.

Clearly recognition is an important issue in relation to divine presence, and to this extent recognition is intimately implicated in divine appearances. But should recognition be thought of, as it is by Pucci, as a definitive boundary condition? Perhaps, in view of the circle of interpretation that the text sets up in this passage between the reaction of the Greeks and Trojans and the possible reactions of the audience of the epic, the primary point we should draw out from this example is that the question of recognition is better thought of as a problem inherent to contexts of divine epiphany than as a possible boundary criterion by which to include instances within, or exclude them from, 'divine epiphany' as a category. The slide of focalisation in the text between the simile proper and the narrated reactions of the Greeks and Trojans points on a formal level towards this precise problem: who sees, what is seen, and how perception takes place are absolutely live issues in relation to divine presence. Perception, misperception, recognition and failure of recognition are central parts of the problem of divine epiphany.

So, just where might a categorical approach draw a line around divine epiphany as an event? What exactly are the limits of 'true epiphany' within a categorical approach? And, accordingly, where to begin? Questions such as these go right to the heart of the matter. I have foregrounded this example in order to destabilise the premises of a categorical approach. This instance evidently does operate within the parameters of the type-scene of 'divine visitation', insofar as it follows the rhythm of divine motivation, descent with simile, and disguised appearance upon arrival next to a mortal.⁴⁹ But considered as an epiphany it is altogether less than straightforward. The two points I have focused on both relate to how one might hope to define divine epiphany without thereby truncating the possibilities of divine presence that the Homeric poems offer. For what the inequalities between the perception and knowledge of the characters in the Homeric poems and those of their audience create is precisely an opportunity to foreground the modalities of divine presence.

⁴⁹ *Il.* 4.69-73: Zeus motivates Athene's action; 74-79: Athene descends with simile; 86-92: Athene arrives in disguise next to Pandaros. For 'divine visitation', see above, pp. 54-56.

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By contrast, another response to the question of what starting point to adopt in considering divine epiphany in Homer has been to take a particular, relatively 'explicit' instance as somehow paradigmatic or exemplary—as a concrete prototype of 'epiphany': this is the second of the two scenarios I mentioned above. The trajectory of investigation may then flow outwards from this central point. Even in exploration of the further reaches of what might seem relevant to divine epiphany, the paradigmatic instance or prototype can still function as a fundamental point of secure reference. This has been the case, for example, with the appearance of Athene to Akhilleus in *Iliad* 1.⁵⁰ Various themes of possible significance in the consideration of the interaction of men and gods in Homer have been developed in specific reference to this scene, especially in relation to the Homeric 'psychology' of decision-making and divine intervention. Within this broader process specific expectations have been derived from the dynamics of this particular encounter about the way epiphany works in general in Homer. Scholarly approaches here have divided into two broad groups. One focuses on the fact that Athene is visible to Akhilleus alone, and concludes that the main significance of 'epiphany' is psychological; forthwith this does away with any questions about the precise modalities of divine presence, by suggesting that epiphanies are more or less to be understood as poetic elaborations of interior psychological processes.⁵¹ I have questioned aspects of such an approach to Homer in the previous chapter; I will leave the issue to one side here.⁵² The other main approach, more orthodox in recent times and more pertinent to this discussion since it understands divine epiphany as a category of its own and not as a refraction of some other thing, takes its starting point from the observation that, since we are told in unusually concrete terms that Athene tugs Akhilleus' hair, she must therefore be considered 'really' present. In such a view, this is 'perhaps the most remarkable of all corporeal interventions by a god or goddess in the *Iliad*';⁵³ or again, 'the intervention itself ... is elaborated in graphic detail that leaves no room for

⁵⁰ *Il.* 1.193-222. See particularly Nilsson (1924); other discussions of this scene specifically in the wake (pro or contra) of Nilsson include Dodds (1951), 14ff.; Snell (1953), 30ff.; Whitman (1958), 185, 231, cf. 220-221; Russo and Simon (1968), 488-489; Tsagarakis (1980); MacCary (1982), 6-10, 171-172; Fowler (1987), 6; Hooker (1990).

⁵¹ See esp. Nilsson (1924). Others develop more sophisticated versions of this line of reasoning, but still by reference to psychology and not to the presence of the goddess: see Dodds (1951), 14-15; Snell (1953), 35-36; Russo and Simon (1968), esp. 488-489; MacCary (1982), 6-10, 171-172. These readings are a development of the 'allegorical' methods of Homeric commentators: see e.g. Eustathius 82.9f., 84.35f. van der Valk; see further Lamberton (1986).

⁵² For some specific criticisms, see Pucci ([1985] 1998d), 77-78.

⁵³ Thus Kirk (ed.) (1985), on *Il.* 1.197.

doubt concerning the physical reality of the the divine presence ... [and thus] the dramatic elaboration ... obliges us to accept the objective reality of the intervention'.⁵⁴ So far, so good for epiphany it might seem, since the foregrounding of this unusual detail has the apparently convenient effect of rendering unnecessary further questions about the modalities of divine presence in this instance: by the pull on Akhilleus' hair the 'real physical presence' of the goddess is made explicit, even if Athene herself cannot be seen by anyone other than Akhilleus. Within the terms of such a reading, the category divine epiphany in relation to Homer is understood as having a relatively unproblematic central point of reference, namely in the 'real physical presence' of a god.

Yet what is this real physical presence?⁵⁵ The passage is a striking one, with several visually expressed details, particularly Akhilleus's fair hair, and the dread flashing eyes:⁵⁶

στῆ δ' ὀπιθεν, ξανθῆς δὲ κόμης ἔλε Πηλείωνα,
οἷω φαινομένη, τῶν δ' ἄλλων οὐ τις ὀράτο.
θάμβησεν δ' Ἀχιλεὺς, μετὰ δ' ἐτράπετ'· αὐτίκα δ' ἔγνων
200 Παλλὰδ' Ἀθηναίην· δεινὴ δέ οἱ ὅσσε φάνθεν.

The passage has often seemed reassuringly straightforward in its tactile and visual orientation. But for all her tactility, the goddess herself remains somewhat elusive at the point of contact. This meeting between the goddess and hero takes place precisely when Athene stands behind Akhilleus, and it is objectified only in terms of Akhilleus's hair; the goddess's 'body', by contrast, or more specifically her hand, remains implicit in the pragmatics of the action-verb, ἔλε, rather than being made explicit at the moment of contact.⁵⁷ This is followed by the narrator's observation that Athene appears to Akhilleus alone, which introduces a visual element into this moment of interaction between goddess and mortal. But it is also the case that when the narrator offers this comment about her respective visibility and non-visibility the goddess still stands behind the hero. Then Akhilleus reacts, turns, and recognises the goddess. Dread eyes flash. Is it this that Akhilleus perceives? And is this by implication what the audience should also see the goddess in?

⁵⁴ Thus James (1996), 221. Compare Tsagarakis (1980), 78-79; Hooker (1990), esp. 28-32; Constantinidou (1994), 12.

⁵⁵ For this question applied to the 'true form' of the Homeric gods, see esp. Vernant ([1986] 1991a); W. Smith (1988).

⁵⁶ *Il.* 1.197-200.

⁵⁷ On the hands of the gods, see below, pp. 77-82.

Pucci, in his stimulating re-examination of the detail of this passage, has argued for the fundamental reticence of even this 'most explicit' of Homeric epiphanies.⁵⁸ For Pucci the figure of Athene here is a complete blank, since in his view, as a result of the supposedly 'irresolvable' reference of οἱ in *Il.* 1.200, even the flashing eyes might not be hers:⁵⁹

Without the certainty that it is Athena who is described with those terribly flashing eyes, the goddess's presence remains for the reader a blank presence, with no imaginable form.

More frequently readers of the scene take it to be the case, without discussion, that the phrase refers to Athene.⁶⁰ One ancient commentator states that the connective particle here functions as explanatory—ὁ δέ ἀντὶ τοῦ γάρ—and this is the basis on which this line has been read as explanatory of Akhilleus's recognition of the goddess, and therefore on which the οἱ is taken to refer possessively to Athene.⁶¹ But an alternative case has been argued now again by Robertson, namely that the eyes in question are those of Akhilleus.⁶² The most recent discussion of the passage by Pulleyn concludes agnostically, but fairly, that 'there is no conclusive argument either way', and in doing so reinforces Pucci's assertion that there is a significant ambiguity of reference.⁶³ Read in this way, the flash of dread eyes is an image that may belong indeterminately to Akhilleus and to Athene at this moment of recognition. A desire to visualise the goddess at this crucial point of the *Iliad* must remain frustrated to this extent: if particular readers and particular audiences wish to pin the eyes down to Athene or Akhilleus this reveals more about their desire to see the goddess or the hero than it does about the potential play of the text. In a certain sense, what the narrative achieves at this point is to demonstrate the real force of the narrator's assertion that the goddess is not visible to anyone other than Akhilleus.

⁵⁸ Pucci ([1985] 1998d), 69: 'one of the most explicit epiphanies in the poem'.

⁵⁹ Pucci ([1985] 1998d), 74; and on the reference of οἱ, comparing *Il.* 19.16-17 where Akhilleus' eyes blaze, note 74 n. 11: 'the ambiguity [of οἱ in *Il.* 1.200] is irresolvable'.

⁶⁰ See e.g. Kirk (ed.) (1985), on *Il.* 1.200. For a survey of the positions adopted by translations and commentaries on this passage, see Robertson (1999).

⁶¹ Sch. bT on *Il.* 1.200; cf. e.g. Willcock (ed.) (1978a), on *Il.* 1.200. But on epic δέ, see Bakker (1997), 62-72, esp. 71-72: 'δέ discretizes (presenting two ideas as two different steps in a speech or as two items in a catalogue)'. The ambiguity of οἱ was canvassed by Leaf, but not with the same intent as Pucci, since in either case Leaf still operated on the understanding that the eyes were Athene's: 'οἱ may refer to Athene—her eyes gleamed terrible; or to Achilles—terrible shone her eyes on him.'; Leaf (ed.) (1900-1902), on *Il.* 1.200, comparing *Il.* 19.17.

⁶² Robertson (1999).

⁶³ Pulleyn (2000), 179-180 on *Il.* 1.200.

But what in fact are the modalities of Akhilleus's recognition of Athene here?⁶⁴ Beyond the question of the flashing eyes, Pucci is right to suggest that Athene's presence here is largely blank so far as the audience are concerned: in Pucci's terms, much 'remains in the sphere of the unexpressed'.⁶⁵ Akhilleus recognises—*αὐτίκα δ' ἔγνω*—Athene, but what he sees remains concealed from the audience, just as it remains concealed from the rest of the Greeks.⁶⁶ The verbal focus here is on the moment of recognition, *αὐτίκα*, but the mode of perception itself is not so clear. It is certainly the case that the aorist *ἔγνω* recurs repeatedly in contexts of the recognition of a god by a mortal.⁶⁷ Some instances specifically highlight the mode of perception by the addition of a sight expression. Compare Aineias's recognition of Ares in *Iliad* 17: *ἔγνω ἑσάντα ἰδών*.⁶⁸ In an instance such as this the mode of recognition is qualified in visual terms. But other examples encompass a mode of recognition that is not visually oriented in this same way, particularly in contexts of divine disguise or omen: *φρεσὶ δ' ἀθανάτην θεὸν ἔγνω*, the narrator says of Telemachos in *Odyssey* 1.⁶⁹ In these instances, focus is directed more towards the fact of recognition than to any particular perceptual modality.⁷⁰ In the present case, the visibility of Akhilleus's recognition of the goddess remains tantalisingly underdetermined: beyond the ambiguous flashing eyes, there is no further explication of this moment of recognition, only an image that expresses its immediacy.

The ongoing debate over the referent of *οἱ* in this scene is itself testimony to the importance of this image at this crucial narrative juncture in

⁶⁴ For the multiple responses of ancient commentators to this same question, see sch. bT on *Il.* 1.199-200. W. Smith (1988), 169-172, stresses the modality of *γινώσκω* in this and related examples: 'the moment when the penetrating gaze of a shrewd mortal senses the divine nature'; for discussion of *γινώσκω* and *ὁράω* in contexts of epiphany, cf. Tsagarakis (1980), 72 and n. 56; Dietrich (1983), 65-66.

⁶⁵ Pucci ([1985] 1998d), 74.

⁶⁶ On the limitation to Akhilleus alone, see Prier (1989), 61-62: 'The others are not part of his experience or the phenomenological condition it represents. Everyone only looks for himself (*horato*) and sees nothing.'

⁶⁷ See *LfgE*, s.v. *γινώσκω*, esp. I, 1b, 2a and 2b.

⁶⁸ *Il.* 17.334. Compare *HomHymDem* 94-95: οὐδέ τις ἀνδρῶν | εἰσορόων γίγνωσκε βαθυζώνων τε γυναικῶν; 111: οὐδ' ἔγνω· χαλεποὶ δὲ θεοὶ θνητοῖσιν ὀρᾶσθαι; also *Od.* 13.312: ἀργαλέον σε, θεά, γνῶναι βροτῶι ἀντιάσαντι, | καὶ μάλ' ἐπισταμένωι· σὲ γὰρ αὐτὴν παντὶ ἔσκεις. For sight expressions and the phrase *αὐτίκα δ' ἔγνω*, see *Il.* 14.153-156, 17.84-85.

⁶⁹ *Od.* 1.420; in contexts of omens, see esp. *HomHymHerm* 213-214: οἰωνὸν δ' ἐνόει τανυσίπτερον, αὐτίκα δ' ἔγνω | φηλητὴν γεγαῶτα Διὸς παῖδα Κρονίωτος; cf. *Od.* 2.159: ὄρνιθας γνῶναι; again contrast the visually expanded version at *Od.* 15.531-532: οὐ τοι ἄνευ θεοῦ ἔπτατο δεξιὸς ὄρνις· | ἔγνω γάρ μιν ἑσάντα ἰδὼν οἰωνὸν ἐόντα.

⁷⁰ The *φρένες* at *Od.* 1.420 must not be taken as indicating an interiorised and disembodied 'mind': see esp. M. Clarke (1999), 73ff., 83ff. What is underlined by this taking place 'in the *φρένες*' is the *physical-emotional* aspect of this moment of recognition.

the *Iliad*. Without dispute what the image offers is an encapsulation of emotive vision of a peculiarly intense sort. But it is also an encapsulation which seems to operate *indeterminately* both as the moment of vision (looking at) in which Akhilleus's perception of the goddess takes place and as the moment of vision (being looked at) by which he recognises the goddess for who she is. The combination of the immediacy of Akhilleus's recognition and the intense emotion captured in the flash of dread eyes replays the frequent correlation in the Homeric epics between emotion and the moment of perception.⁷¹ The important difference is that this moment of recognition specifically evokes a visual reciprocity. What this image offers is a *mutuality* of dread gaze between the hero and the goddess, in a moment of extraordinary intensity.

Comparison with another moment of similarly intense gaze involving Akhilleus points to the fundamental importance of the gaze in Homeric poetics, and of Akhilleus's gaze in particular.⁷² But this comparison is also revealing insofar as it points to what seems to have been occluded in the encounter between Akhilleus and Athene, namely an objectified mode of perception, which is exactly what the highly visualised representation of the arms of Akhilleus offers in this instance. At the beginning of *Iliad* 19, Thetis brings to Akhilleus the divinely made armour in which he will return to battle. As Thetis places the armour in front of Akhilleus, it is characterised in multi-sensory terms: τὰ δ' ἀνέβραχε δαίδαλα πάντα.⁷³ Edwards in his commentary suggests that there is an 'effective imprecision' in the object of the Myrmidons' vision

⁷¹ On the correlation of emotion and the moment of perception, see Turyn (1929), 33-43.

⁷² On the language of sight and appearance in Homer, see esp. Prier (1989), 25-67. For the general point that eye expressions 'index' emotion in Homer, see Holoka (1983); also Lateiner (1995), 43, 89, with the further point that 'Homer uses the gazing eye and avoidance of eye contact in attention-focusing protocols'. The climactic scenes of the *Iliad* centre upon the gaze of Akhilleus and Priamos: see esp. *Il.* 24.628-633, cf. 476-484, and Crotty (1994), 101-102. But note also the avoidance of mutual gaze by Odysseus and Penelope at *Od.* 23.89-95: Odysseus looks down, κάτω ὁρώων, waiting for Penelope to 'see' him, ποτιδέγμενος εἴ τί μιν εἴποι ... ἐπεὶ ἴδεν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν; Penelope's own gaze fluctuates between recognition and non-recognition: ὅψει δ' ἄλλοτε μὲν μιν ἐνωπαδίως ἐσίδεσκειν, ἢ ἄλλοτε δ' ἀγνώσασκε κακὰ χροὶ εἴματ' ἔχοντα; on this passage, see Goldhill (1991), 16-17. For an astute discussion of one neglected instance, see Prier (1980), esp. 179-180 with n. 4 (reworked as Prier (1989), 31-32). Entirely fitting given this Homeric focus on the gaze is the afterlife of Homer in Greek visual culture: see esp. Zeitlin (2001).

⁷³ *Il.* 19.12-13. On δαίδαλα in Homer, see Leumann (1950), 131-133; Frontisi-Ducroux (1975), 35-44; S. P. Morris (1992), 3-35, esp. 4: 'far greater powers of connotation than specific denotation.' A δαίδαλον is a crafted object in its visually evident, skilled elaboration, and has associations with the vocabulary of light: see esp. Frontisi-Ducroux (1975), 41-42. For S. P. Morris (1992), 35, the word in Homer evokes 'glamour, power, and danger'; cf. Frontisi-Ducroux (1975), 64-82.

and fear, since Thetis herself has just arrived in their midst beside Akhilleus.⁷⁴ But what is most significant is how the arms themselves constitute an objectified token of divine power and craftsmanship; in their overwhelming detail, the arms entirely obviate any need to explore further the appearance of Thetis at this point.⁷⁵ The goddess is elided in these moments behind the hyper-objectified visuality of the arms themselves. Of course, it is this clash of metal and the variegations of light that come from the armour's decoration that cause the Myrmidons to avert their gaze so as *not* to see, but only at the point when the armour has already become experientially apparent to all in its aural and visual dimensions.⁷⁶ Akhilleus alone meets the flash of the armour with the flash of his own gaze, in a intense moment of reciprocity between the hero and the divinely-made armour: ἐν δέ οἱ ὄσσε | δεινὸν ὑπὸ βλεφάρων ὥς εἰ σέλας ἐξεφάανθεν.⁷⁷ The play of sound (ἀνέβραχε) and sight (δαίδαλα) that provokes fear and makes the Myrmidons avert their gaze, is for Akhilleus reciprocally constituted—his eyes themselves flash as if in response—and he holds the armour in his hands and gazes upon its variegations with joy: τέρπετο δ' ἐν χείρεσσιν ἔχων θεοῦ ἀγλαὰ δῶρα. | αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ φρεσὶν ἦσι τετάρπετο δαίδαλα λεύσσω.⁷⁸ Each of these are moments of intense emotion, both for the Myrmidons and for Akhilleus himself, and these intense emotions are encapsulated above all in the play of vision, in the directing or averting of the gaze. But crucially the play of vision here depends precisely on the objectified, visualised nature of the arms. The variegations of the great shield have been explored at length in the preceding book of the *Iliad*, and just as there the audience's imaginative eye has attended to the shield in obsessive detail, so here the effect of this wondrous decoration upon its viewers within the frame of the

⁷⁴ See Edwards (ed.) (1991), on 19.13-17. For the Myrmidons' reaction at *Il.* 19.14-15, Μυρμιδόνες δ' ἄρα πάντας ἔλε τρόμος, οὐδέ τις ἔτλη | ἄντην εἰσιδέειν, ἀλλ' ἔτρεσαν, Edwards compares Hektor's reaction to Akhilleus as he approaches like Enyalios, with light blazing from his armour, *Il.* 22.136-137.

⁷⁵ Contrast *Od.* 24.47-57, cited by Edwards (ed.) (1991), on 19.13-17: 'The description of their fear is dramatically expanded when the goddess comes with the Nereids to mourn her dead son'.

⁷⁶ Compare Logue ([1981-1994] 2001), 196: 'And as she laid the moonlit armour on the sand | It chimed ... | And the sound that came from it | Followed the light that came from it | Like sighing | Saying: | *Made in Heaven.*'

⁷⁷ *Il.* 19.16-17. For the association of Akhilleus and σέλας/αὐγή, cf. *Il.* 18.205-214, 19.374-380, 22.25-30, 22.134-135, and Prier (1989), 46-50, esp. 48, who characterises *Il.* 19.16-17 in terms of a 'transfer of power through light and wrath from the arms of Achilles, a transfer that is, after all, the primary effect of the Shield itself.' See esp. Whitman (1958), 137-147, on the association of Akhilleus with fire and light.

⁷⁸ *Il.* 19.18-19.

epic is explored.⁷⁹ Later again in *Iliad* 19, it is the shield itself that flashes out across the sky: ὥς ἄπ' Ἀχιλλῆος σάκεος σέλας αἰθέρ' ἔκτανεν | καλοῦ δαιδαλέου.⁸⁰ Here the flash from Akhilleus's head brought about by Athene in *Iliad* 18 becomes a self-generated property of the shield itself in an altered iteration of the previous line.⁸¹ In Akhilleus's recognition of Athene in *Iliad* 1, there is nothing like this objectified play of light and vision. Instead the flashing eyes function as a token of a mutual gaze, but one in which the audience of the epic cannot quite participate.

So what the play of the flashing eyes in this passage ultimately reveals is another Homeric take on inequalities of perception between the characters of the epic and the epic's audience. The 'real, physical presence' of the goddess exists for Akhilleus, not for anyone else. We wonder what Akhilleus sees, and in doing so we confront the constraints that the narrative imposes upon our vision. Pucci makes this point, but with a particular twist that I find less satisfactory:⁸²

But what is it that Achilles sees? The Athena *promakhos* ... ? The text allows us to imagine so, if we wish, but it seems to me that the "not-said" in our passage signifies precisely that the poets of this text knew no more than they tell us about the form in which Athena appears. It is impossible, in other words, that the reader is here being invited to imagine the figure of the goddess as she is represented, for example, in her role as *promakhos*. ... The text does *not* invite us to imagine that the characters see and know more than we do.

Is it necessarily the case that the text 'does *not* invite us'? To my mind, the situation is, if not exactly the converse, certainly complementary to that which I outlined above in the case of the spectacular descent of Athene in *Iliad* 4. There the goddess' presence behind the portentous sign was known by the audience but not by the Greeks and Trojans, and the audience were implicitly invited to complete the interpretative task that the Greeks and Trojans began but could not complete. Here the situation is reversed in certain respects: while both the audience and Akhilleus know that this is Athene, the goddess actually appears

⁷⁹ For the complex dynamics of the ekphrasis of the shield, see Becker (1995). For the recurrent desire both in antiquity and more recently to reimagine the shield in very different terms, see esp. Taplin ([1980] 1998), 97-98.

⁸⁰ *Il.* 19.379-380. The whole simile, 19.374-380, compares a flash of light from the fire of mountain shepherds appearing out at sea to sailors. Moulton (1977), 15, comments on the 'unparalleled' concentration of fire comparisons at this point; cf. W. C. Scott (1974), 66-68.

⁸¹ See *Il.* 18.203-214, esp 214: ὥς ἄπ' Ἀχιλλῆος κεφαλῆς σέλας αἰθέρ' ἔκτανε. See Edwards (ed.) (1991), on 19.379-383.

⁸² Pucci ([1985] 1998d), 74-75.

to Akhilleus alone: οἷφι φαίνομένη, τῶν δ' ἄλλων οὐ τις ὁρᾷτο.⁸³ The audience knows, but cannot see; Akhilleus does not know in the first place, but recognises as soon as he turns about to face Athene. The only response left to the audience is to imagine how Akhilleus himself perceives the goddess, which in turn underlines the suggestive brilliance of the flashing eyes as a partial yet somehow sufficient marker of the interaction between Athene and Akhilleus at this point. Accordingly, if in that previous instance the categorical boundaries of divine epiphany seemed to be open to question, in this case the precise modalities of the 'real physical presence' that are presumed to lie behind a supposedly paradigmatic epiphany seem actually to be far less certain from the audience's point of view than is sometimes assumed.

Just as in Athene's meteoric descent, inequalities in knowledge and perception between the characters of the epic and the epic's audience play a significant role here. The specific focus in this instance is the play of divine presence between 'physicality' and 'blankness', and the consequent problem of how sight relates to perception in contexts of divine presence. I have criticised aspects of Dietrich's approach to divine epiphanies in Homer in the previous chapter, but it is in one sense a distinct virtue of this approach to have begun from a related question about the modalities of the presence of the gods in Homer in relation to perception and sight, even if Dietrich's subsequent conclusions are problematic because of his pursuit of 'plausible visualisation' as a means to distinguish the 'religious elements' in Homeric epiphany from the merely picturesque.⁸⁴ I would not want to follow Dietrich down that particular path, but it does appear that to ask questions about perception and divine presence in such contexts is an important step. As these problematic examples show, how divine presence is and is not (partially) perceived is a significant problem of divine epiphany. The perceptual modalities of divine presence run counter to intuitive expectations about presence and appearance in various ways. Accordingly, it is not the case that the question of divine presence can function merely as a limiting condition *for* divine epiphany, as a means to determine actual epiphany from the merely picturesque use of language, or indeed, with Dietrich, as a means to test epiphany as a 'viable theological concept'.⁸⁵ The questions which I highlighted at the beginning of this chapter must remain central to discussion if the modalities of divine presence and appearance are not to be cut short.

⁸³ Il. 1.198. Pucci ([1985] 1998d), 73, considers this line in relation to the epic audience.

⁸⁴ Dietrich (1983), esp. 54; see above, pp. 23-25.

⁸⁵ Dietrich (1983), 67.

What I would argue, then, is that questions of presence, its manifestation and perception must not be foreclosed. These questions do not circumscribe the boundaries of divine epiphany, but are fundamental problems implicated at every point of intersection between gods and mortals. In the approaches to divine epiphany that I have discussed above, such problems have tended to be glossed over as the more or less self-evident basis on which discussion may proceed. A categorical approach truncates the potential of divine presence in certain ways, and in particular the potential of presence to be seen but not recognised; it is my contention that the limits of 'epiphany' in such contexts cannot so easily be drawn. There is, as Vernant observed, no 'single standard scenario' for divine appearances, for all that some aspects of divine presence show recurrent features and granting that moments of divine presence may often take place within certain type-scene structures.⁸⁶ What remains fundamental, even in these contexts, is the elusive potential of divine presence. Accordingly, the alternative strategy that I want now to pursue is to keep those questions which I outlined at the start—what divine presence might be thought to be, how it might be manifested, how it might be recognised—centrally positioned in my discussion. These questions cannot be simply subsumed beneath definitional parameters, whether explicitly in the case of those discussions which take their starting point from a categorical observation, or implicitly in the case of discussions which proceed outwards from a relatively 'explicit', and therefore central, instance of divine epiphany.



The long arm of Zeus ...

How then to begin a discussion of Homeric epiphany? In one respect, what I will do is similar to the paradigmatic approach that I discussed above in relation to the appearance of Athene to Akhilleus, since I will start my exploration of the modalities of divine presence in the Homeric poems with a particular example.

⁸⁶ See above, p. 49 n. 7.

But this discussion will differ in one crucial respect. This key difference is that I will begin with an example in which the question of divine presence is far from self-evident. Insofar as the appearance of Athene to Akhilleus has tended to appeal to scholars for its upfront—and therefore ‘real’—physicality, and insofar as this scene has functioned accordingly as a secure point around which discussions of divine presence have been built, the consequent mode of inquiry is inevitably one that is built up from a quasi-definition—in this instance ‘real’ physicality—around which other material is then structured, even if the inquiry itself is not always framed explicitly in definitional terms. In such a case, this centering point functions as a *de facto* definition of divine epiphany. By contrast, I want to approach divine epiphany from the margins, in accordance with the supposition that divine absence and presence are key *problems* in such contexts. Precisely by testing the margins of what might be possible, I hope to follow a more hermeneutic approach to the dynamics of divine presence, instead of determining in advance, whether explicitly or implicitly, what divine presence should constitute in any particular instance.

It is from this basic question of divine absence and presence that I will begin. Closely related but somewhat differently framed are questions about how divine presence might be manifested and recognised. I will consider each of these questions more or less in turn, in relation to a number of passages that exemplify distinct points about the modalities of divine presence in the Homeric poems. These passages are offered not as paradigms of ‘epiphany’ as such, but as examples which illustrate specific challenges in the play of divine absence and presence. In this way, instead of pursuing a central paradigm of epiphany, I want to frame epiphany in terms of this set of recurring questions, the exploration of which shows how epiphany might be more profitably viewed as a relational process operating across the play of absence and presence and the perception of them, than as a momentary and objectifiable event.

It constitutes almost a truism in studies of the gods in Homer that Zeus himself never intervenes in person on the Iliadic battlefield in any form, disguised or otherwise, and accordingly that there are no epiphanies of Zeus.⁸⁷ Nonetheless, at the beginning of *Iliad* 8, Zeus descends from Olympos to Ida, having forbidden the other gods to take an active part in proceedings; the following books contain various examples of intervention by Zeus in support of Hektor and the Trojans, often by means of ‘natural’ phenomena, such as the

⁸⁷ See e.g. Taplin (1992), 134: ‘Zeus is never entirely frivolous. It may be related to this that he never participates *in propria persona* in battle, unlike the other gods.’

thunderbolt that prevents Diomedes from routing the Trojans and which is recognised for what it is by Nestor, or the bloody rain with which *Iliad* 11 begins.⁸⁸ One passage in this sequence of interventions of Zeus is particularly relevant to questions about the modalities of divine presence, and above all to a consideration of the boundary between the absence and presence of gods. It is one of two instances, in de Jong's words, 'where Zeus himself directly intervenes, rather than through Hera, Athena or some other god'.⁸⁹ In this case Hektor makes for the Greek ships like an eagle through a crowd of birds, and Zeus pushes him on from behind 'with his long arm':⁹⁰

- 690 ἄλλ' ὥς τ' ὀρνίθων πετεηνῶν αἰετὸς αἴθων
 ἔθνος ἐφορμᾶται ποταμὸν πάρα βοσκομενάων,
 χηνῶν ἢ γεράνων ἢ κύκνων δουλιχοδείρων,
 ὥς Ἑκτωρ ἴθυσε νεὸς κυανοπρώροιο
 ἀντίος αἶξας· τὸν δὲ Ζεὺς ὤρσεν [ὤσεν Ατ] ὀπισθεν
 695 χειρὶ μάλα μεγάλῃ, ὥτρυνε δὲ λαὸν ἄμ' αὐτῶι.

What interests me particularly about this passage is how Zeus's action here is expressed, which raises in a challenging form the question of how divine presence and power might be imagined to function. As a result of the lack of an explicit statement of Zeus's presence in the passage under discussion, some have been led to conclude that the expression is 'an anthropomorphic metaphor', just a figure of speech, and they leave the matter there.⁹¹ But what might the ramifications of describing this as a figure of speech, or similar, actually be in such a context? This question is cast into particular relief here, because this figure of speech itself comes in the wake of a developed simile

⁸⁸ Zeus to Ida, *Il.* 8.1-52; thunderbolt in front of Diomedes, 8.130-144, and cf. the earlier thunderflash in front of the Greeks, 8.75-77; bloody rain, 11.52-55, cf. 16.459-461. On the unusual events of *Iliad* 8 see Fenik (1968), 219ff. For the structural importance of *Iliad* 8, see now Willcock (1995), building upon Reinhardt (1961), 138: 'Das unentbehrlichste Buch zwischen dem ersten und dem sechzehnten ... ist das achte'.

⁸⁹ See de Jong (1987), 71; the other is Zeus breaking Teuker's bow-string at *Il.* 15.459-464. Nilsson (1968), vol. 1, 370, characterises *Il.* 15.690-695 as an obvious gaffe ('Entgleisung') on the part of the poet; see Lesky (1961), 27, for criticism.

⁹⁰ *Il.* 15.690-695.

⁹¹ See e.g. Leaf (ed.) (1900-1902), on *Il.* 15.694, who calls it 'an anthropomorphic metaphor which strongly contrasts with the actio in distans of Διὸς νόος, [at 15.1242]', but Leaf concludes that 'we have no right to suppose that Zeus has descended from Ida and is present in person on the battlefield'. Compare Willcock (ed.) (1984), on *Il.* 15.694: 'Zeus is not to be thought of as physically present in the battle, in spite of χειρὶ μεγάλῃ'; also Gross (1970), 367, who comments: 'In diesem außergewöhnlichen „Eingreifen“ des Gottes darf man gewiß das Bemühen des Dichters sehen, das göttliche Wirken möglichst anschaulich zu gestalten'; but note 374: Homer is an 'umsichtiger Gestalter ... der diese kleinen Mittel benützt, um die göttlichen Mächte anschaulich vor dem Auge des Lesers erstehen zu lassen.'

whose subject, the flight of an eagle, is itself associated with Zeus's power to act in the world.⁹²

Appropriately enough, there is evidence at this point in the textual history of the *Iliad* of a philological response to uncertainties of this sort, namely in the alternative Aristarchean reading ὤσεν against the vulgate ὤρσεν.⁹³ Janko comments here: 'Aristarchus' text ὤσεν ... makes more vivid (or indeed grotesque) the image of Zeus's "long arm". But the vulgate ὤρσεν ... smooths this metaphor for Zeus's power and is apt'.⁹⁴ Janko's reasoning here is revealing to the extent that it is formulated as a choice between emphasizing or attempting to domesticate ('smooths') the problematic expression. The choice for Janko is apparently clear: he would prefer what would be the 'grotesque' long arm of Zeus to be a mere metaphor for Zeus's power. But is this an adequate response to the problems that the text offers us here? What this philological choice conceals is precisely the 'theological' problem of how Zeus's action is to be conceived. At such a moment, are smoothness and aptness necessarily the most appropriate criteria to invoke?

I would suggest not. Above all, the image of Zeus's long arm here directs us to the difficulty of maintaining a consistent distinction between the exercise of divine power and the actual presence of a god. Precisely what is lacking for reading Zeus's long arm in terms of metaphor is a secure point of comparison. Given that the divine body is a 'superbody', in Vernant's terms, a body whose most obvious characteristic is that it defies corporeal codes, there are no a priori grounds for saying that Zeus's arm could not reach down from Olympos.⁹⁵ Compare the way the head of Eris reaches up from the battlefield to heaven in *Iliad* 4:⁹⁶

⁹² See esp. the omen at *Il.* 24.314-321; see below, p. 136 n. 357 and p. 161.

⁹³ West (ed.) (1998-2000) follows the vulgate, as does Leaf (ed.) (1900-1902). Monro and Allen (edd.) ([1902] 1930) follow Aristarkhos, as often; for this tendency, see Janko (1990), 330; also Nagy (1996b), ch. 5; Nagy (1998).

⁹⁴ Janko (ed.) (1992), on 693-5. Janko goes on to compare Akhilleus's expression for Zeus's protection of Troy: Ζεὺς χεῖρα ἔην ὑπερέσχε, *Il.* 9.419-420; cf. below, p. 75.

⁹⁵ See Vernant ([1986] 1991a).

⁹⁶ *Il.* 4.439-445. For the various personified appearances of Eris, see Kirk (ed.) (1985), on *Il.* 4.440-441; Erbse (1986), 28-29. For Eris on the shield of Akhilleus with Kydoimos and Ker, see *Il.* 18.535-540: ἐν δ' Ἐρις, ἐν δὲ Κυδοιμὸς ὀμίλειον, ἐν δ' ὀλοῇ Κήρ, ἢ ἄλλον ζῶν ἔχουσα νεούτατον, ἄλλον ἄουτον, ἢ ἄλλον τεθνηῶτα κατὰ μόθον εἴλκε ποδοῖν. ἢ εἶμα δ' ἔχ' ἄμφ' ὤμοισι δαφεινὸν αἵματι φωτῶν. ἢ ὀμίλειον δ' ὥς τε ζωὴ βροτοὶ ἢ δ' ἐμάχοντο, ἢ νεκροὺς τ' ἀλλήλων ἔρπον κατατεθνηῶτας. M. L. West (ed.) (1998-2000) deletes 535-538; it is argued that these lines are interpolated from [Hes.] *Aspis* 156-159: see Edwards (ed.) (1991), on 18.535-538, in support of Lynn-George (1978); but for criticism of the aesthetic argument here, see M. Clarke (1999), 234 n. 6. Even if Eris's presence on the battlefield is expressed here differently from *Il.* 4, this does not

440 ὦρσε δὲ τοὺς μὲν Ἄρης, τοὺς δὲ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη
 Δεῖμός τ' ἤδ' ἐφόβος καὶ Ἔρις ἄμοτον μεμαῦα,
 Ἄρεος ἀνδροφόνιοι κασιγνήτη ἑτάρη τε,
 ἥ τ' ὀλίγη μὲν πρῶτα κορύσσεται, αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
 οὐρανῶι ἐστήριξε κάρη καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ βαίνει.
 ἥ σφιν καὶ τότε νεῖκος ὁμοίον ἔμβαλε μέσσωι
 445 ἐρχομένη καθ' ὅμιλον, ὀφέλλουσα στόνον ἀνδρῶν.

Eris reaches proportions that are as 'grotesque' as the long arm of Zeus, as her transformation of the action on the battlefield finds an objectified correlate in her physical transformation. Similarly Ares will cover a vast expanse when he is knocked down by Athene in *Iliad* 21:⁹⁷

τῶι βάλε θοῦρον Ἄρηα κατ' αὐχένα, λῦσε δὲ γυῖα.
 ἑπτὰ δ' ἐπέσχε πέλεθρα πεσών, ἐκόνισε δὲ χαίτας,
 τευχέα τ' ἀμφαράβησε· γέλασσε δὲ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη

Ares here himself plays out the fall of the warrior in anthropomorphic form, but on a larger scale. Just as is the case in the transformations of the gods into various shapes, the ontological distinction between actuality and metaphor, between 'being' and 'being like' in cases such as this, is difficult to sustain with reference to the fluid forms of the gods.⁹⁸ Accordingly what is at issue in reading the long arm of Zeus as metaphor or grotesquery is not simply the alternative texts ὦσεν or ὦρσεν, but a larger set of expectations about the ways that divine physicality, power and presence might be thought to relate to one another in the Homeric poems.

Janko's preference for a metaphorical reading is not a preference that is shared by all. Lesky, for one, concludes that it isn't possible to decide whether the poet wants his audience to see Zeus at work in bodily fashion, 'leibhaft', or not; that is, whether to be conscious of the thrust of Zeus's mighty hand, or simply to regard the frequent motif of the helping god as being given a particular imagistic emphasis at this point.⁹⁹ Lesky compares Athene's reinforcement of Akhilleus's battle cry with her own voice in *Iliad* 18:¹⁰⁰

constitute a falsification of either image. To Clarke's observation 'that in the Shield of Achilles itself there is a parallel for the appearance of divine figures who would not normally be visible to mortals, since in the siege scene an army is lead by Ares and Athena ... (XVIII.518-19)', add the observation that just as Eris, Kydoimos and Ker are active in this siege which features Ares and Athene, similarly when Eris appears in *Il.* 4 in the company of Deimos and Phobos this is also in the immediate context of activity by Ares and Athene, *Il.* 4.439-440.

⁹⁷ *Il.* 21.406-408.

⁹⁸ See esp. Bushnell (1982); Pucci (1987), 110-122; W. Smith (1988).

⁹⁹ Lesky (1961), 27.

¹⁰⁰ *Il.* 18.217-218.

ἔνθα στὰς ἦϋς, ἀπάτερθε δὲ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη
φθέγγατ’.

In the adverb, ἀπάτερθε, lies a certain ambivalence about the precise nature of Athene's action at this point: from where does she add her voice to Akhilleus'? Edwards regards ἀπάτερθε as indicating that Athene is physically removed, that is, she does not stand beside Akhilleus in adding her voice to his shout.¹⁰¹ But nevertheless the entire point here is that the presence of Athene's voice at least makes the shout distinctly divine in its dimensions, even as Akhilleus' own cry is expressed in a line beginning used elsewhere, as Edwards notes, only of Here and Athene herself.¹⁰² The action of the god creates something of an eddy of uncertainty in the correlation of presence and power. Further along the scale from this judiciously non-committal approach by Lesky is the response of Erbse, who reads the long arm of Zeus in unequivocally concrete terms as an example of exquisite magnificence: 'Die Vorstellung ist von erlebener Großartigkeit'.¹⁰³ Erbse takes his cue from an ancient commentator on this passage: the scholion first offers a comment on Zeus's hand in terms of a metaphorical image or expression: λείπει τὸ ὥς, οἱ δὲ τῇ δυνάμει; but then it offers a more concrete alternative: ἢ ἐκπληκτικὸν τὸ τῆς φαντασίας, εἰ ἡ χεὶρ τοῦ Διὸς μέχρι τῆς γῆς φθάνει θνητὸν ὠθοῦσα.¹⁰⁴ To which Erbse adds his comment: 'So ist es in der Tat'.¹⁰⁵ In Erbse's view, Zeus's devotion for Hektor is expressed in the concreteness of the image, as Zeus comes almost to identify himself with Hektor as the representative of Zeus's plan. Thus Erbse sees in the long arm of Zeus a moment of physical contact between the Olympian and Hektor that is for him a significant expression of a certain movement within the overall narrative frame of the *Iliad*—so far is this from constituting a merely metaphorical image of Zeus's power.

In each of these accounts of this particular image, much seems to be at stake. This is the case not least because of the aesthetic reactions that the image provokes. In addition to the respectively negative and positive reactions of Janko ('more vivid (or indeed grotesque)') and Erbse ('Großartigkeit') that I quoted above, one might further compare Ameis, Hentze and Cauer: 'eine

¹⁰¹ Edwards (ed.) (1991), on 18.217-218.

¹⁰² *Il.* 5.784 (Here) and 11.10 (Athene).

¹⁰³ Erbse (1986), 220: 'Welche Ausmaße muß dieser Weltenherrscher haben, wenn er mit seiner Hand vom Himmel langen und den wild fechtenden Helden seinem Ziel entgegenschieben kann, aus Besorgnis, der letzte Schritt könne dem Sterblichen aus eigener Kraft nicht gelingen! Die Vorstellung ist von erlebener Großartigkeit'; cf. Janko (ed.) (1992), on 15.693-5: 'wrongly Erbse, *Götter* 220'.

¹⁰⁴ Sch. bT on *Il.* 15.695.

¹⁰⁵ Erbse (1986), 220.

grobsinnliche Vorstellung'—a 'grossly sensual' image.¹⁰⁶ Why such strong reactions? It is certainly the case that the image of a god's hand is by no means unique to this instance.¹⁰⁷ For the hand of Zeus, particular comparison is made with an expression that occurs twice in *Iliad* 9, where in Akhilleus's phrase, repeated by Odysseus, Zeus is said to hold his hand in protection over Troy, μάλα γάρ ἔθεν εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς | χεῖρα ἔην ὑπερέσχε.¹⁰⁸ This image has prompted similar reactions to the long arm of Zeus. Mostly it is domesticated as a mere expression.¹⁰⁹ Or else it provokes unfavourable characterisations for its potential physical dimensions: Kullmann calls it 'eine "groteske" Steigerung'.¹¹⁰ For Gross, this need only be the case if the hand were to be regarded as real, rather than as 'ein Bild für die Macht des Zeus', and he goes on to make further comparison other images of a god's, especially Zeus's, hand 'held over' which he likewise wants to read 'als Zeichen der Macht Schutz und Rettung'.¹¹¹ Revealingly, Gross leaves out of account at this point of his analysis the hand of Apollo 'held over' Aineias to protect him against the onrush of Diomedes in *Iliad* 5, and this omission seems due in no small part to the non-physical, imagistic way in which Gross wants to read this protective hand of Zeus.¹¹² In this instance, by contrast, Apollo's hand is resolutely physical in its dimensions—γινώσκων ὃ οἱ αὐτὸς ὑπείρεχε χεῖρας Ἀπόλλων | ... τρὶς δέ οἱ ἐστυφέλιξε φαεινὴν ἄσπίδ' Ἀπόλλων—and it is as such that Gross will shortly after refer to it.¹¹³ One further example adduced by Gross in reference to the hand of Zeus is also revealing. This is a passage from Exodus, where in a curious sequence Jahweh protects Moses from seeing his face with his hand in

¹⁰⁶ Ameis, Hentze and Cauer (edd.) (1913-1930), on *Il.* 15.694f.; cited by Erbse (1986), 220.

¹⁰⁷ Note also Zeus's self-described μένος καὶ χεῖρες ἄαπτοι at *Il.* 8.450; see Gross (1970), 366-367, and cf. *LfgE*, s.v. ἄαπτος: it is suggested that the word was understood by the successors to Homer via folk-etymology with ἄπτομαι, and thus taken to connote Zeus's remoteness: 'ist der freundschaftlichen und furchtbefreienden Geste des χειρὸς ἄπτεσθαι, χεῖρα λαμβάνειν unzugänglich'. Gross (1970), 367 n. 6, observes that the adjective ἄαπτος is used only of Zeus's hands among the gods (elsewhere it is used of heroes' hands); this use is precisely in a context where Zeus is threatening the other gods. See also now Felson (2002), 46 n. 13.

¹⁰⁸ *Il.* 9.419-420 = 9.686-687. See Kullmann (1956), 134; Gross (1970), 367-368; Janko (ed.) (1992), on 693-5.

¹⁰⁹ Thus Hainsworth (ed.) (1993), on *Il.* 9.420, declares: 'The protective hand of Zeus is an easy metaphor ... though more typical of Near Eastern thought than Greek.'

¹¹⁰ Kullmann (1956), 134.

¹¹¹ Gross (1970), 367-368, connects ὑπερέχειν χεῖρα with the use of ὑπερέχειν of the sun, *Il.* 11.735, and morning star, *Od.* 13.93, despite the fact that those instances are intransitive; alongside the *Il.* 9 instances cf. *Il.* 4.249, 24.374, *Od.* 14.184.

¹¹² Gross (1970), 368, refers to this passage further down the same page.

¹¹³ *Il.* 5.433, 437. For a transitive use of ὑπερέχειν with reference to another (non-human) body part, see *Il.* 2.426: σπλάγχνα δ' ἄρ' ἀμπίραντες ὑπείρεχον Ἡφαίστοιο (on the fire-god here, see M. Clarke (1999), 266-267).

terms that are strikingly concrete; for Gross, this too could have been a 'groteske Vorstellung', except that again 'es geht auch hier nur um ein Bild für das gnädige Eingreifen Jahwes'.¹¹⁴ Here again the choice between the literal and the figurative, between the actual and the metaphorical, is formulated in aesthetic terms, between a grotesque actuality and a mere image—the transition for this god is from 'grotesk' to 'gnädig'. This is an aesthetic choice with significant theological dimensions.¹¹⁵ The theological agenda seems fairly plain with regard to the hand of Jahweh, but what about in discussions of Zeus's hand? Just what might the aesthetic issues involved in Zeus's long arm stretching down from Ida to the battlefield be thought to connote in this respect? Gross's next paragraph begins with reference to the hand of Apollo in the *Iliad* 5 passage quoted above: 'Eine leibhaftige göttliche Hand ist dagegen mit der des Apollon gemeint'.¹¹⁶ By contrast with the long hand of Zeus, in the case of Apollo a 'real, bodily hand is meant'. Perhaps with gods other than Zeus, the supreme Olympian, the stakes are not so high.

Precisely what the 'sensual nature' of the image of Zeus's long arm draws attention to is the potential for physical and emotive contact between god and hero. It is the particular strength of Erbse's reading of this image to have emphasised this point, even if I will offer below a different reading of the narrative ramifications of this divine push in the back. Other reactions to this image in aesthetic and theological terms have perhaps served to obscure this physical and emotive aspect of the question of divine presence. But one of the more interesting features of this image is not so much that it reflects an anthropomorphising conception of how a god might act, but that there takes place in the slide between Zeus's acts of divine will and his action 'with long arm' a process of emergent objectification: the power of Zeus emerges into quasi-physicality. This image is not 'just a metaphor', a poetic image in a weak sense, but is more than this, namely a particular presentation of the workings of a god in terms that can be 'felt'. The long arm of Zeus on such a reading is not simply a cognitive symbol for Zeus's will—the long arm of Zeus as 'good to think with'; more than this, it is a sensorially active, bodily objectification of Zeus's power as a subjective agent within the Iliadic world. If one is still to speak of metaphor, this is metaphor in a peculiar form, in which the

¹¹⁴ Exodus 33.22-23 The passage is of interest precisely for the features that are downplayed by Gross (1970), 368.

¹¹⁵ For the palpable relation between divinity and monstrousness elsewhere in the OT, see Beal (2002), 47-55, on Leviathan and God in Job; cf. G. Steiner (2001), 40-41, on the 'hypertrophy of aesthetic values' in God's answer to Job from out of the whirlwind.

¹¹⁶ Gross (1970), 368.

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¹¹⁶ Gross (1970), 368.

impertinence of the image is undermined by the potential of a god to substantiate it.¹¹⁷ An image such as this brings with it a sense of emergent corporeality to the presence of the power of the god, a certain emphasis on the potential *physical* consequences of such 'metaphorical' contact between a mortal and the power of a god.

The most obvious instance of the powerful physicality of a god's hand is Apollo's blow to Patroklos's back with his downturned hand shortly before that hero's death in *Iliad* 16:¹¹⁸

στῆ δ' ὀπιθεν, πληξεν δὲ μετάφρενον εὐρέε τ' ὦμω
χειρὶ καταπρηνεῖ

The effects are profound. Patroklos's eyes reel: στρεφεδίνηθεν δέ οἱ ὄσσε.¹¹⁹ His helmet is knocked off: τοῦ δ' ἀπὸ μὲν κρατὸς κύνειν βάλε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων.¹²⁰ The sound and image of the helmet rolling away under the feet of the chariot-horses offers another externalised and sensorially oriented realisation of Patroklos's distress:¹²¹

ἦ δὲ κυλινδομένη καναχὴν ἔχε ποσσὶν ὑφ' ἵππων
αὐλώπις τρυφάλεια, μίανθησαν δὲ ἔθειραι
αἶματι καὶ κόνιησι·

Matching the sound of the helmet is the image of its crest mired in blood and dust, in the physical elements of the battlefield. Patroklos's spear shatters in his hand: πᾶν δέ οἱ ἐν χεῖρεσσιν ἄγη δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος | βριθὺ μέγα στιβαρὸν κεκορυθμένον.¹²² Patroklos's shield falls to the ground: αὐτὰρ ἀπ' ὦμων | ἀσπίς

¹¹⁷ For the complications of metaphor, see e.g. Goldhill (1984), 21: 'the apparent solving cannot fully repress or totally solve the enigma ... Derrida expresses this potentiality of metaphor in characteristic style: "metaphor is the moment of possible sense as a possibility of non-truth"'; here 'non-truth' corresponds to divine transcendence of normal frames, as in an arm that could reach down from Ida to push Hektor on.

¹¹⁸ *Il.* 16.791-792. Fenik (1968), 217, compares Poseidon's bewitchment of Alkathoos at *Il.* 13.434-444; but this obscures the specific physical modalities of Apollo's impact upon Patroklos.

¹¹⁹ *Il.* 16.792. For the boldness of στρεφεδίνηθεν, see Janko (ed.) (1992), on 16.791-2.

¹²⁰ *Il.* 16.793.

¹²¹ *Il.* 16.794-796. For the alliteration of consonantal stops in the dactylic run of 794, see Janko (ed.) (1992), on 16.794-5. For the powerful externalised objectification of Patroklos's distress compare Janko (ed.) (1992) on 16.791-804: 'The poet dwells on this moving detail as if it stands for the hero's own head lying in the dust', with further parallels given on 16.794-800. For this externalised substantiation of pain, see Scarry (1985), esp. 15-16, where Scarry cites the Homeric recognition of pain-in-the-weapon, as in the arrow 'freighted with dark pains', *Il.* 4.117: 'at the external boundary of the body, it begins to externalize, objectify, and make sharable what is originally an interior and unsharable experience.' Compare Weil ([1956] 1983), 3: 'To define force—it is that x that turns anybody who is subjected to it into a *thing*.'

¹²² *Il.* 16.801-802.

σὺν τελαμῶνι χαμαὶ πέσε τερμίδεσσα.¹²³ Apollo causes Patroklos's breastplate to be loosened: λῦσε δέ οἱ θώρηκα ἄναξ Διὸς υἱὸς Ἀπόλλων.¹²⁴ With the loosening of the breastplate, Patroklos's wits are overcome and his joints dissolve: τὸν δ' ἄτη φρένας εἶλε, λύθεν δ' ὑπὸ φαίδιμα γυῖα, ἢ στῇ δὲ ταφών.¹²⁵ The final element of this sequence, στῇ δὲ ταφών, speaks precisely of a state of profound, existential loss, of a crucial suspension of Patroklos' status as an agent on the Iliadic battlefield, and of his reduction to a state of profound passivity.¹²⁶ Each of these stages comes as a consequence of Apollo's initial blow, the full amplification of which is reached only with the blow to Patroklos's unprotected back by Euphorbos as a doublet of Apollo's earlier blow.¹²⁷ Patroklos's unmaking is expanded in the pathetic image of Euphorbos retreating back into the crowd as Patroklos himself—marked by another apostrophe, Πατρόκλεες ἱππεῦ—stands 'naked' in military terms in the midst of battle.¹²⁸ It is likewise significant that the explication of the significance of the armour itself—for Patroklos, for Hektor, for Akhilleus—is brought within the frame of the effects of Apollo's blow, and thus comes not as a digression or parenthesis, but as an integral part of Apollo's unmaking of Patroklos's ability to participate in combat.¹²⁹ In an instance like this, the use of the hand might well reflect on one

¹²³ *Il.* 16.802-803.

¹²⁴ *Il.* 16.804.

¹²⁵ *Il.* 16.805-806. See Janko (ed.) (1992), on 16.804-5, for the parallelism of 'loosening'.

¹²⁶ Prier (1989), 89-90, discusses τέθηπα, ταφών and the use of the latter in the phrases ταφών ἀνόρουσε and στῇ δὲ ταφών: 'an experience that ... induces an involuntary physical movement or some other action, a powerful externally induced response that sometimes turns the "this" into a dazed animal'. The correlation of physical action (ἀνόρουσε, στῇ) with loss of agent-status underlines the sudden emergence of the person as an object of (self)contemplation in their object-like state. On the physicality of θάμβος-states, cf. Lateiner (1995), 45-46.

¹²⁷ The lines are parallel: *Il.* 16.791, στῇ δ' ὀπιθεν, πληξεν δὲ μετάφρενον εὐρέε τ' ὦμω; *Il.* 16.806-807, στῇ δὲ ταφών. ὀπιθεν δὲ μετάφρενον ὀξεί δουρὶ ἢ ὦμων μεσσηγὺς. Higbie (1990), 168, points out that μετάφρενον is 'completely localized' in this position but the phrase ὀπιθεν δὲ μετάφρενον never recurs. I would add that the coordination of ὀπιθεν and μετάφρενον recurs only at 16.791. For Euphorbos as a doublet of Paris in the killing of Akhilleus: see Mühlestein (1987), 78-81; Janko (ed.) (1992), on 16.808-811; Dowden (1996), 54 n. 38.

¹²⁸ 'Naked': *Il.* 16.814-815, οὐδ' ὑπέμεινε Πάτροκλον γυμνόν περ ἑόντ' ἐν δηϊοτήτι; on γυμνόν, see Janko (ed.) (1992), on 16.812-17; for a psychoanalytic reading of the 'naked' warrior, see MacCary (1982), 152-156. Apostrophe: *Il.* 16.812, cf. 16.787, ἔνθ' ἄρα τοι, Πάτροκλε, φάνη βιότοιο τελευτή. There is a series of apostrophes of Patroklos in *Il.* 16: see A. Parry (1972), 9-22; Frontisi-Ducroux (1986a), 24-25; for these as a 'reflex of focalisation through Achilles', see Martin (1989), 235-236; Martin (1993), 239.

¹²⁹ *Il.* 16.796-800. To this extent, the twin emphasis on the armour and the divine unmaking of the warrior has a rationale here that does not depend only on 'original' motifs like the invincibility of Akhilleus's armour; cf. Janko (ed.) (1992), on 16.777-867; more fully, Edwards (1987), 115-116, 264-265, drawing upon J. R. Wilson (1974). Janko cites *Il.* 17.13, 125 and 205 as indicating Patroklos's armour is still on him; but what these lines reflect is the pattern that when a warrior is unmade by death, the body and the arms become

level, to quote Janko, 'the contrast between effortless divine action and its drastic effects'.¹³⁰ But it also places a particular emphasis on the physicality of the god's power to act. In accordance with this emphasis the poet pays lavish attention to the joint physical-emotional consequences of this blow with downturned hand.

One opportunity presented by Apollo's action here is that of connecting the starkly physical properties of a sequence such as this more closely with other instances of divine hands which are in this respect less startling, but which nonetheless display the emergent logic of such a presentation of divine power and presence at work. Attention to divine hands is of particular interest for the significant role that hands play within the Homeric epics in communicative contexts. Particularly significant in this respect within the world of the Homeric epics are those intense and intimate moments mainly involving mothers, wives and gods (mostly goddesses) that are the recurrent contexts of *χειρί τέ μιν κατέρεξε*, always in association with speech, and again of the formula *ἐν τ' ἄρα οἱ φῦ χειρί*, likewise in association with speech.¹³¹ Lateiner draws attention to hands as 'the most versatile organ of in-awareness [sic] nonverbal behaviour'.¹³² I would place particular emphasis here on the presence of the hands 'in-awareness': as such, hands function as particularly conscious physical extensions of subjective agency in the world, and in this respect the role of hands as the leading 'organ of action' is far from coincidental.¹³³ Accordingly,

separable objects over which to contend: here, although Apollo has unmade Patroklos as a warrior *before* his death, thus separating Patroklos and his arms, when his death is actually brought about by Euphorbos and Hektor then Patroklos's corpse and armour are treated in more usual ways.

¹³⁰ Janko (ed.) (1992), on 16.791-804. Compare Griffin (1980), 136 n. 56, comparing *Il.* 15.361 'for the contrast of the effortless action of the god and the catastrophe it produces for man'. On the formula *χειρί καταπρηνεί* in the Homeric poems, see Lowenstam (1981), 20, 68ff.

¹³¹ For *χειρί τέ μιν κατέρεξε*, see *Il.* 1.361, 5.372, 6.485, 24.127; *Od.* 4.610, 5.181, 13.288. For *ἐν τ' ἄρα οἱ φῦ χειρί*, see *Il.* 6.253, 6.406, 14.232, 18.384, 18.423, 19.7, *Od.* 2.302 (Antinoos to Telemakhos in an abusive use of the intimate gesture, characteristic of the Suitors' nonverbal behaviour, for which see Lateiner (1995), 206), 8.291, 10.280, 11.247, 15.530 (Theoclymenos to Telemakhos). On these two formulaic phrases and their association with speech, see Martin (1989), 18-20: 'the physical quality of speech' is well illustrated by these "hand and word" descriptions [which] can also occur whenever one speaker establishes contact with a speaker for an emotional private conversation'. On the gestures, see also Levine (1982), 100-101; Lateiner (1995), 57 and n. 48; but note van Wees (1998), for criticism of Lateiner in terms of the relationship between gestures and their description/evocation in Homeric contexts.

¹³² Lateiner (1995), 71.

¹³³ Compare Gross (1970), 365: 'Nächst dem Gesicht sind die Hände die ausdrucksvollsten und symbolkräftigsten Teile des menschlichen Körpers'. Note also Bremmer (1991), 22: 'In Greece, the hand was considered *the* organ for action and therefore could only be shown by real males'; also Scarry (1985), 173, 252-254, 364 n. 74, for the hand, 'the direct

the emergence of a divine hand as an object of poetic attention constitutes a significant realisation of a god's status as agent, and a realisation which places particular emphasis on the physical and emotional dimensions of action within the Homeric world.

Certainly it is the case that instances other than the interaction of Apollo with Patroklos show further possibilities for the dimensions of divine presence as realised in their hands. Several of the instances of the two characteristic hand and speech formulae mentioned above are relevant in this respect. Thetis, for instance, recurs as one who extends her hand and one to whom hands are extended. This reflects in particular the roles Thetis plays as mother and as goddess, as she mediates between Akhilleus and Zeus and secures new armour for Akhilleus.¹³⁴ But more closely connected with both the long arm of Zeus and the downturned hand of Apollo are those instances where the divine hand appears as an embodied instrument of force.¹³⁵ This occurs in the context of god fighting against god in *Iliad* 21. At one point Athene picks up a rock with her *χειρὶ παχείῃ* to throw at Ares; at another Athene strikes Aphrodite across the breasts with this same *χειρὶ παχείῃ*.¹³⁶ Then Here seizes the hands of Artemis in her own left hand and uses her right to take Artemis's bow and quiver and to hit her about the head with them:¹³⁷

490 ἦ ῥα, καὶ ἀμφοτέρως ἐπὶ καρπῶι χεῖρας ἔμαρπτεν
σκαίῃ, δεξιτερῇ δ' ἄρ' ἀπ' ὤμων αἴνυντο τόξα,
αὐτοῖσιν δ' ἄρ' ἔθεινε παρ' οὐατα μειδιόωσα
ἐντροπαλιζομένην· ταχέες δ' ἔκπιπτον οἵστοί.

In these instances strength is embodied in the hands of the gods, even for comic effect. For this comic reversal of the embodied force of divine hands, compare further a passage a little earlier in *Iliad* 21 where Aphrodite takes Ares by the hand in his distress after being struck by Athene's rock.¹³⁸ Again, when Iris

agent of making', and its extension into/by tools and weapons: this is the body part of greatest interest to Marx and the Bible.

¹³⁴ See *Il.* 1.361 (Thetis to Akhilleus), 18.384 (Charis to Thetis), 18.423 (Hephaistos to Thetis), 19.7 (Thetis to Akhilleus), 24.127 (Thetis to Akhilleus).

¹³⁵ Compare *Il.* 5.854, the hand of Athene; *Il.* 16.704, the hand of Apollo; cf. *Il.* 15.355, the feet of Apollo. See also M. Clarke (1999), 247, in favour of the vulgate reading *χεῖρας* at *Il.* 21.548, which thus offers the heavy hands of (D)eath: ὅπως Θανάτοιο βαρείας *χεῖρας* ἀλλάλκοι.

¹³⁶ *Il.* 21.403 λίθον εἴλετο *χειρὶ παχείῃ*; 21.424-425 πρὸς στήθεα *χειρὶ παχείῃ* | ἤλασε; compare also Poseidon at *Il.* 20.143: ἡμετέρῃς ὑπὸ χερσὶν ἀναγκαίῃφι δαμέντας. On the phrase *χειρὶ παχείῃ*, see esp. Nagler (1993).

¹³⁷ *Il.* 21.489-492.

¹³⁸ Aphrodite and Ares: *Il.* 21.416-417: τὸν δ' ἄγε χειρὸς ἐλοῦσα Διὸς θυγάτηρ Ἀφροδίτη | πυκνὰ μάλα στενάχοντα.

leads Aphrodite away in *Iliad* 5 there is no immediate reference to the hand, but of course it is her hand that Diomedes has wounded shortly before that point.¹³⁹ The embodiment of power in the hands of the gods is laid open in one particular image of Zeus:¹⁴⁰

τότε δὴ ῥα πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε
Ἰδης ἐν κορυφῇσι καθέζετο πιδηέσσης
οὐρανόθεν καταβάς· ἔχε δ' ἀστεροπὴν μετὰ χερσίν.

Zeus's power has an externalised, objective form that itself rests in the hands of the god: the extension of strength from the god's will through his hands into the objective encapsulation of that power is set out in clear terms. Divine hands play significant parts in contexts where strength and power are at issue among the gods.

But I want to pick out one particular appearance of the hand of a god, namely Poseidon's use of his hand to propel Aineias into the air and out of combat with Akhilleus in *Iliad* 20, as Akhilleus rampages across the battlefield:¹⁴¹

325 Αἰνείαν δ' ἔσσευεν ἀπὸ χθονὸς ὑψόσ' αἰείρας·
πολλὰς δὲ στίχας ἡρώων, πολλὰς δὲ καὶ ἵππων
Αἰνείας ὑπέραλτο θεοῦ ἀπὸ χειρὸς ὀρούσας,
ἔξε δ' ἐπ' ἐσχατιὴν πολυαΐκος πολέμοιο·

This baroque image provides a useful point of comparison with the 'long arm of Zeus', especially since this passage also appears within a larger sequence of interaction between gods and mortals. Compare particularly the earlier events of *Iliad* 20, where Apollo appears to Aineias in the guise of Lykaon to urge him on verbally and physically.¹⁴² In Aineias's reply to Apollo/Lykaon, he refers to Zeus's support and then to the likelihood of being overcome by the hands of Akhilleus and Athene: ἦ κ' ἐδάμην ὑπὸ χερσίν Ἀχιλλῆος καὶ Ἀθήνης.¹⁴³ Aineias also offers an explanatory coda on the assistance of Athene for Akhilleus which itself modulates into a statement of the general presence of one of the gods by Akhilleus's side: αἰεὶ γὰρ πᾶρ' ἔεις γε θεῶν, ὃς λοιγὸν ἀμύνει.¹⁴⁴ Apollo replies with an exhortation for Aineias to pray to the gods, since he is the son of Aphrodite, and Akhilleus is the son of a lesser goddess: κείνος δὲ χερείονος ἐκ

¹³⁹ Iris and Aphrodite, *Il.* 5.353-354: τὴν μὲν ἄρ' Ἴρις ἐλοῦσα ποδὴνέμος ἔξαγ' ὁμίλου | ἀχθομένην ὁδύνησι, μελαίνετο δὲ χροά καλόν. Aphrodite's hand, *Il.* 5.336: ἄκρην οὔτασε χεῖρα.

¹⁴⁰ *Il.* 11.182-184.

¹⁴¹ *Il.* 20.325-328.

¹⁴² *Il.* 20.79-85.

¹⁴³ Hands of Akhilleus and Athene: *Il.* 20.94. Zeus's support: 20.92-93: αὐτὰρ ἐμὲ Ζεὺς | εἰρύσαθ', ὃς μοι ἐπῶρσε μένος λαιψηρά τε γούνα.

¹⁴⁴ *Il.* 20.98.

θεοῦ ἐστίν.¹⁴⁵ In this fashion a contest of power and strength is prepared: the hands of Akhilleus and Athene are pitted against Aineias, and he himself is assisted in the event by the hand of Poseidon. The physicality and presence of this hand seems assured by the fact of Aineias's superhuman leap to the edge of the battle. It is in this place that Poseidon comes to stand near Aineias again.¹⁴⁶ But just like the long arm of Zeus this divine hand has uncertain dimensions: is Aineias transported the whole way in the hand of Poseidon as if in a cherry-picker, or does he leap from the hand as springboard? Such questions are scarcely to the point. The significance of the hand to this extent lies precisely in its embodiment of divine strength, not in its visual dimensions. The play of hands in such contexts gives a specific focus to interaction between the gods, and between gods and mortals, in terms of 'feltness', of the physical and emotional concomitants of action: the hand of god. But this embodiment is not a limitation on the operation of divine power, but instead an extension of this operation in ways that add 'sense' and sensation to the play of divine power and presence on the Iliadic battlefield. These are the dimensions to which the 'sensual' aspect of the long arm of Zeus draws our attention, how the presence and power of the gods may emerge in its figuration as felt, evident, and peculiarly significant.

There are two specific aspects of the language used of the long arm of Zeus that I want to draw attention to in this regard, not because they are unusual, but rather the reverse, because these are small yet still significant ways in which the poetic texture of Homeric language reinforces the immediacy of its narrative in speech. In the first place, the position of *χειρὶ μάλα μεγάλῃ* in runover at the beginning of the hexameter line contributes to the foregrounding of this long arm: Zeus's action is presented verbally in the previous line, and now the long arm emerges as the objectified instrument of this action in a movement from verbal expression to concrete realisation.¹⁴⁷ Comparison may be made with other instances of the divine hand being

¹⁴⁵ *Il.* 20.106-107.

¹⁴⁶ *Il.* 20.329-330.

¹⁴⁷ This is runover of the 'progressive' or 'adding' type, which is less marked than other types, but it is here additionally marked by a following sense pause (characteristic of the 'runover word'): see Kirk (ed.) (1985), 31-33; Edwards (1966), esp. 137-148; Higbie (1990), 32-41. Runover is not emphatic a priori; emphasis emerges out of a convergence of semantics and metrics: for this basic point, see Bassett (1926), 120-121, but more constructive is Edwards (1966), 140. Compare Higbie (1990), 41: 'In adding enjambement, the structure of the sentence is satisfied with verse end, so what follows, be it an embellishment of the clause or the joining of another clause, is both unexpected and non-essential.' For a survey of the terminology applied to runover, see Edwards (1986), 223-229.

foregrounded as the embodied instrument of divine action, some in runover, some at line and clause beginning.¹⁴⁸ Where the 'hand and speech' formulae mentioned above couple the hand with speech in evoking the emotive physicality of gesture and speech in contexts of communication, the interest in these instances lies in how the function of the divine hand as a realisation of the presence of divine strength and power is underlined in the rhythmic texture of the Homeric narrative.

In the second place, the phrase *μάλα μεγάλη* lends a particular communicative emphasis to the emergent physicality of Zeus's arm. The particle *μάλα* has been characterised in its use with adjectives like *μέγας* in terms of an intensifying function, and its use is heavily weighted towards speech over narrative.¹⁴⁹ As such, in Griffin's view, it gives a nuance of 'informality' and suggests 'a sort of emphasis which would have slightly blurred the uniform and dispassionate mode of presentation which the Muse's narrative called for'.¹⁵⁰ This particle focalises narrative in certain ways. As such, the phrase *μάλα μεγάλη* lays stress how Zeus's arm comes to the attention of the narrator and audience as physically perceptible, as something that could be 'felt'. For *μάλα* as a marker of communicative emphasis in such contexts, compare several instances of the *μάλα μέγας* phrase. Two occur in the context of Hekuba's distress at the sight of the abuse of Hektor's body in *Iliad* 22.¹⁵¹ In the first instance Hekuba's distress is described, as she tore her hair, ripped off her head-covering, and cried out at the sight of her son: *κώκυσεν δὲ μάλα μέγα παῖδ' ἐσιδοῦσα*.¹⁵² Hekuba's grief is expressed in strong physical terms, and the vocal instantiation of her grief is characterised by the *μάλα μέγα* phrase. The emotion

¹⁴⁸ Runover: *ἡ χειρὶ καταπρηνέῃ*, *Il.* 16.792 (Apollo), *Od.* 13.164 (Poseidon). *ἡ χειρὶ πάλιν ἐρύσας*, *Il.* 5.836 (Athena). Line and clause beginning: *ἡ χειρὶ καταπρηνέῃ*, *HyAp.* 333 (Here); *ἡ χειρὶ δ' / δέ*, *Il.* 3.385 (Aphrodite: *χειρὶ δὲ νεκταρέου ἑανοῦ ἐτίναξε λαβοῦσα*; *ἡ γρηῖ δέ μιν ἔϊκυλα*; the juxtaposition of the divine hand and the disguise as an old woman is the pivot of the whole scene), 14.272 (Hypnos' instructions to Here). Similarly emphatic, but evocative of an embodied mutuality of divine action, is *Il.* 21.285-286, where Poseidon and Athena stand hand in hand to assist Akhilleus: *στήτην ἐγγὺς ἰόντε, δέμας δ' ἄνδρεςσιν ἔϊκτην. ἡ χειρὶ δὲ χεῖρα λαβόντες ἐπιστώσαντ' ἐπέεσσιν*.

¹⁴⁹ Thesleff (1954), 55, characterises the Homeric use of *μάλα* in relatively negative terms, even if '[q]uite often, however, it has an emphatic position.' But see Griffin (1986), 45-46: the usage of *μάλα* is predominantly in speech not narrative; by comparison with the very common usage of *μάλα* with adjectives in speech, it is 'in narrative almost wholly limited to the 3 phrases *μάλα μέγας*, *μάλα πίνος* and *μάλα πολλά*'.

¹⁵⁰ Griffin (1986), 45-46.

¹⁵¹ Other instances: *Il.* 9.303 (Odysseus on the honour the Greeks will do Akhilleus); 10.172 (Nestor on the evident need of the Greeks); 15.321 (Apollo's shout); 17.595 (Zeus's thunder-lightning); 17.723 (lifting corpses up on high); *Od.* 18.4 (description of Iros).

¹⁵² *Il.* 22.407.

of the moment of perception (παῖδ' ἐσιδοῦσα) is realised in its concrete expression, and the μάλα μέγα phrase contributes a communicative emphasis on the perceptual tangibility of this grief. In the second instance, shortly afterwards, the phrase reappears in Hekuba's own lament. For Hekuba, Hektor was her prayer, for the Trojans he was their boon and great glory:¹⁵³

ὁ μοι νύκτας τε καὶ ἡμαρ
εὐχολὴ κατὰ ἄστυ πελέσκειο, πᾶσί τ' ὄνειαρ
Τρωσί τε καὶ Τρωϊῆσι κατὰ πτόλιν, οἷ σε θεὸν ὥς
435 δειδέχατ'· ἦ γὰρ καὶ σφι μάλα μέγα κῦδος ἔησθα

Here Hekuba underlines Hektor's significance for Troy and the Trojans, in her stress upon the quasi-divine reception and perception that Hektor received from the Trojans, and in the μάλα μέγα κῦδος that he embodied for them. In this context μάλα μέγα κῦδος marks the emotive stress that Hekuba places upon this status, and reinforces her statement of his significance to Troy. Elsewhere Apollo will shout μάλα μέγα and Zeus's own thunder-lightning resounds μάλα μεγάλα, both times in contexts where each god wields the aegis: in both place the μάλα μέγας phrase underlines the perceptible quality of their actions.¹⁵⁴ In a similar way, in Zeus's χειρὶ μάλα μεγάλῃ the agency of the god is given a communicative emphasis that reinforces the emergence of this arm as a kind of bodily presence.

Zeus's long arm is presented in these lines in terms of an emergent embodiment of action, but it is still not clear how this embodiment is to be perceived. In *Iliad* 16, where Apollo wields his downturned hand to such evident effect, questions about presence and physicality have been somewhat obviated by an explanatory rationale: Apollo himself is 'present', but concealed in the first place from Patroklos by a covering layer of 'mist': ἥρῃ γὰρ πολλῇ κεκαλυμμένος ἀντεβόλησεν.¹⁵⁵ The presence of the god is not in doubt, and the circumvention of visual perception can be seen as part of the emphasis in this sequence on how divine presence may impact upon a person, may be directly

¹⁵³ *Il.* 22.432-435. Janko (ed.) (1992), on 22.433, notes that ὄνειαρ in sing. is elsewhere in early epic associated with 'gods or their gifts'; for the divine comparison, to Janko's citation of *Il.* 22.394 and *Od.* 7.71-72 add the parallel passage, where Odysseus holds out to Akhilleus the prospect of such honour, at *Il.* 9.302-303: οἷ σε θεὸν ὥς | τίσουσ'· ἦ γὰρ κέ σφι μάλα μέγα κῦδος ἄροιο.

¹⁵⁴ Apollo: *Il.* 15.321, σείσ', ἐπὶ δ' αὐτὸς ἄυσσε μάλα μέγα. Zeus: *Il.* 17.595, ἀστράψας δὲ μάλα μεγάλ' ἔκτυπε, τὴν [sc. αἰγίδα] δ' ἐτίναξεν. Compare Logue ([1981-1994] 2001), 160-164, for an attempt to realise in typography the perceptual immediacy of Apollo's cries of warning to Patroklos and subsequent blow.

¹⁵⁵ *Il.* 16.790. For mist as a recurrent motif in the Homeric poems, see Kakridis (1971), 89-107; Kakridis declines to discuss the use of mist by gods to cover themselves or humans, since he regards it, 92, as used 'for purely practical purposes'.

'felt', given that the physical and emotional effects of Apollo's blow are attended to in such detail. After the blow, Patroklos knows what has happened to him, and this knowledge should not be explained away in terms of the prophetic abilities associated with the point of death; this knowledge should be seen as a reflection of the existential impact of this point of contact between god and mortal.¹⁵⁶ But in the case of the long arm of Zeus, there is no corresponding degree of attention to its effects upon Hektor. Our ability to construct a 'theology' of Zeus's action here in terms of a physical distinction between the exercise of power by the god and the god's actual presence remains significantly underdetermined. Granted that we know both that gods can act from afar and that gods may exercise their power in more explicitly physical terms, in Zeus's long arm what we find is a situation where there is a slide between these two ostensibly distinct modes of divine action. The physicality of Zeus's action, for all the potential bodiliness of Zeus's long arm, fluctuates between these points. In this respect, Lesky's caution seems justified. But, more than this, this apparent degree of undecideability has important consequences for a central question of this chapter, namely the consideration of the boundary between the absence and presence of gods: the operation of the long arm of Zeus blurs precisely the criteria on which a god might be said to be 'absent' from a situation where that god is exercising power.

If this passage destabilises questions of presence and absence in relation to the exercise of divine power, what bearing does it have upon the discussion of divine presence and absence in relation to epiphany? From one perspective this might seem a surprising question, since even when the potential physicality of Zeus's long arm in this passage has been conceded, as by Pucci or by Erbse, it has not been specifically discussed in relation to the problem of divine epiphany in the Homeric poems.¹⁵⁷ In such a reading, Zeus's long arm, even if physical, is still 'invisible', and there is no suggestion that Hektor has recognised at this point the particular physical presence of the god; thus there is no 'epiphany'. But what I would like to suggest is that if this peculiarly embodied manifestation of Zeus's active role in the battle narrative of this section of the

¹⁵⁶ *Il.* 16.849-850: ἀλλά με Μοῖρ' ὀλοὴ καὶ Λητοῦς ἔκτανεν υἱός, ἢ ἀνδρῶν δ' Εὐφορβος· σὺ δέ με τρίτος ἐξεναρίζεις. Pelliccia (1995), 276-277 n. 295 suggests that the precognition at the point of death (Patroklos on Hektor's fate at 16.852-854, for which see Janko (ed.) (1992), on 16.852-854) should be extended to include Patroklos's statements about his own death in the lines immediately before.

¹⁵⁷ Erbse (1986), 219-220. Pucci ([1985] 1998d), 72, uses this as an example of the invisibility of gods when they stand behind a hero: 'Naturally [!] Zeus is invisible; some commentators even take the expression as metaphorical and assume that the god is not in fact present on the battlefield at all.'

Iliad is read as part of a larger sequence, then its epiphanic ramifications become more suggestive.

The events of *Iliad* 15 include several sections that are relevant. I will focus first on two sections that offer themselves as significant comparanda for Zeus's later action with his long arm. In the first place, the problematic presence of Zeus's long arm can be contrasted with the earlier presence of Apollo alongside Hektor earlier in *Iliad* 15.¹⁵⁸ There Apollo comes to Hektor on the instruction of Zeus; after identifying himself, he states in strong terms the fact and purpose of his ongoing presence:¹⁵⁹

τὸν δ' αὖτε προσέειπεν ἄναξ ἐκάεργος Ἀπόλλων·
 " θάρσει νῦν· τοῖόν τοι ἄοσσητῆρα Κρονίων
 255 ἔξ Ἰδης προέηκε παρεστάμεναι καὶ ἀμύνειν,
 Φοῖβον Ἀπόλλωνα χρυσάορον, ὃς σε πάρος περ
 ῥύομ', ὁμῶς αὐτόν τε καὶ αἰπεινὸν πτολίεθρον.
 ἀλλ' ἄγε νῦν ἱππεῦσιν ἐπότηρνον πολέεσσιν
 νηυσὶν ἔπι γλαφυρῆσιν ἐλαυνέμεν ὠκέας ἵππους·
 260 αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ προπάραιθε κιῶν ἵπποισι κέλευθον
 πᾶσαν λειανέω, τρέψω δ' ἥρωας Ἀχαιοὺς. "
 ὥς εἰπὼν ἔμπνευσε μένος μέγα ποιμένι λαῶν.

Apollo says that he will literally 'smooth the way' before Hektor, and this presence (ἄοσσητῆρα ... παρεστάμεναι καὶ ἀμύνειν ... ὃς σε πάρος περ ῥύομ') of the god alongside Hektor will culminate in Apollo's decisive destruction of the Achaean wall, which will then allow the Trojans in among the Greek ships in execution of Zeus' plan to bring fire to the ships before he allows a reprieve. Compared with the ostensible physicality of Apollo's presence in this lengthy sequence of divine action on the Iliadic battlefield, the long arm of Zeus is a momentary trace.

In the second place, once Apollo has disappeared from the battlefield, Zeus takes over again as Hektor's primary divine helper. Subsequently, at a critical juncture that is marked as such by the narrator, Zeus acts in this role to protect Hektor from the deadly arrows of Teukros, by breaking Teukros's bow-string.¹⁶⁰ This event is followed by various observations by the characters involved as to who was responsible—a δαίμων, a θεός—culminating in Hektor's

¹⁵⁸ *Il.* 15.236-262.

¹⁵⁹ *Il.* 15.253-262.

¹⁶⁰ *Il.* 15.458-464.

assertion that it was Zeus, to which he adds that such divine assistance is easy to recognise.¹⁶¹

δὴ γὰρ ἶδον ὀφθαλμοῖσιν
 ἀνδρὸς ἀριστῆος Διόθεν βλαφθέντα βέλεμνα.
 490 ῥεῖα δ' ἀρίγνωτος Διὸς ἀνδράσι γίνεται ἀλκή,
 ἡμὲν ὀτέοισιν κῦδος ὑπέρτερον ἐγγυαλίξῃ,
 ἥδ' ὅτινας μινύθει τε καὶ οὐκ ἐθέλησιν ἀμύνειν.
 ὥς νῦν Ἀργείων μινύθει μένος, ἄμμι δ' ἀρήγει.

This statement on Hektor's part is read, particularly by de Jong, as an 'unwittingly' correct observation, based on his earlier knowledge from Iris of Zeus's support.¹⁶² In fact, this suggestion of unwittingness runs directly counter to what Hektor does say, namely that he saw with his own eyes (δὴ γὰρ ἶδον ὀφθαλμοῖσιν) how the arrows were disabled by Zeus (Διόθεν βλαφθέντα βέλεμνα), which leads Hektor precisely into the statement that the might of Zeus is easy for men to recognise: ῥεῖα δ' ἀρίγνωτος Διὸς ἀνδράσι γίνεται ἀλκή.¹⁶³ The suggestion of 'unwittingness' would require some further explication that de Jong fails to provide if it is not to seem mismatched with the directness of Hektor's statements themselves. Notwithstanding this directness, I would argue that there is an important sense in which the dynamics of this phrase, ῥεῖα δ' ἀρίγνωτος 'easily to be recognised', are somewhat less than straightforward here, if in a different way from that conceived by de Jong. In particular I would compare the use of similar phrasing by Aias, son of Oileos, of the departing Khalkhas/Poseidon whom he has just recognised as divine, if not as a specific

¹⁶¹ *Il.* 15.488-493. See de Jong (1987), 157ff.; Pelliccia (1995), 87-89; Collins (1998), 53-57, 61-65. Compare Janko (ed.) (1992), on *Il.* 15.461-470, on the distinction between δαίμων and θεός in such contexts.

¹⁶² Hektor's earlier knowledge: *Il.* 11.200-209. See de Jong (1987), 159: 'Of course, he has not actually seen Zeus intervene, but like Teucer and Ajax he infers from the unexpectedness of the event that a god must have had a hand in it. For rhetorical purposes, and also because since *Λ* 207-9 he knows himself continually supported by Zeus, he mentions that god, unwittingly telling the truth'; compare Janko (ed.) (1992), on *Il.* 15.490-493. Pelliccia (1995), 88, criticising de Jong, stresses that Hektor does clearly have 'insight' into what has happened here, but still only as earlier mediated by Iris and Apollo. See also Collins (1998), 61-65, arguing for a conventional status for Hektor's explanation in terms of ἀλκή from Zeus.

¹⁶³ Contrast Pelliccia (1995), 88-89: 'The problem is ... that he is witnessing the work of a god who operates invisibly through magic. So his language is skillfully adjusted to conceal the problem of conceptualizing just what it is that he claims to have seen ... in short, because Zeus wasn't there to see, Hector has no more concrete information to offer about the means of Zeus' intervention than did the poet in his original description'; accordingly, ἶδον only represents the product of an 'informed inference'. But precisely the point here is what Hektor does 'see', which he recognises (somehow) for what it is; the audience of the epic know that he is right.

god.¹⁶⁴ Given Aias's later exploits, both in the *Iliad* and beyond its temporal frame, the phrase is ironic in Aias's mouth at this point, and hints that on a deeper level the opposite of what Aias states might be the case. In a pointed comic scene later in the epic, Aias will perceive correctly and make complaint about the fact of Athene's assistance to Odysseus in the funeral games, even as he spits out the dung into which he has planted his face when tripped up by the goddess.¹⁶⁵

780 στῇ δὲ κέρας μετὰ χερσὶν ἔχων βοὸς ἀγραύλοιο,
 ὄνθον ἀποπτύων, μετὰ δ' Ἀργείοισιν ἔειπεν·
 "ὦ πόποι, ἦ μ' ἔβλαψε θεὰ πόδας, ἦ τὸ πάρος περ
 μήτηρ ὡς Ὀδυσῆϊ παρίσταται ἡδ' ἐπαρήγει."
 ὥς ἔφαθ'· οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἡδὺν γέλασσαν.

Similarly, the dynamics of Hektor's 'easy recognition' have a grimly ironic overtone here, since Zeus's aid to Hektor and the Trojans will only be temporary: this has been marked out for the audience shortly before with the prayer of Nestor and the favourable response of Zeus.¹⁶⁶ Accordingly, one might modify the import of Hektor's 'unwittingness' here: he is indeed aware of Zeus's assistance as he himself states in bold terms, but he is not aware of the larger plan into which this assistance fits. The play of recognition between the various characters, among whom Hektor is most correct, is thus offered as a challenge to the audience's own awareness of the plan of Zeus, which the narrator has flagged for the audience's attention at the beginning of the incident in the form of a 'reversal passage', which marks, as elsewhere, a significant juncture in the plot-structure of the epic.¹⁶⁷

Τεῦκρος δ' ἄλλον οἷστος ἐφ' Ἑκτορι χαλκοκορυστῇ
 αἶνυτο· καὶ κεν ἔπασσε μάχης ἐπὶ νηυσὶν Ἀχαιῶν,

¹⁶⁴ *Il.* 13.72: ῥεῖ' ἔγνων ... ἀρίγνωτοι δὲ θεοί περ. See Janko (ed.) (1992), on *Il.* 13.72, for the ironic resonances of Aias's assertion here in comparison with *Od.* 4.499-511; see also Pucci (1987), 122; MacCary (1982), 176: 'The *per* is our indication that to call the gods "recognizable" is against expectation, a contradiction in terms, as it were'. Compare Menelaus at *Od.* 4.207, when he compliments Peisistratos as his father's son; an ironic reading is possible, given that the scene takes place in the home of Menelaus and Helen, the arch-adultress.

¹⁶⁵ *Il.* 23.780-784. Shortly before Athene has responded to Odysseus's prayer, first strengthening Odysseus, 23.768-772, then tripping up Aias into the dung from the oxen which Akhilleus has earlier sacrificed for Patroklos, 23.774-777. On the scene, see N. J. Richardson (ed.) (1993), on 768-779, and Köhnken (1981). For Aias's actions in *Il.* 23 as foreshadowings of Aias's story beyond the frame of the *Iliad* itself, see Dowden (1996), 55.

¹⁶⁶ *Il.* 15.370-378.

¹⁶⁷ *Il.* 15.458-462; cf. de Jong (1987), 157. For the structural importance of reversal passages, see esp. de Jong (1987), 68-81; also Fenik (1968), 175; Morrison (1992); Bakker (1997), 178-179. For the language of these passages, see Lang (1989), esp. 7-12 and 23-24.

460 εἴ μιν ἀριστεύοντα βαλὼν ἐξείλετο θυμόν·
 ἀλλ' οὐ λήθε Διὸς πυκινὸν νόον, ὅς ῥ' ἐφύλασσε
 Ἕκτορ', ἀτὰρ Τεῦκρον Τελαμώνιον εὖχος ἀπηύρα

This πυκινὸν νόον of Zeus is what Hektor does not perceive, for all the professed ease of recognising the might of Zeus at work.¹⁶⁸ Hektor's recognition of the assistance of the god is marked by the discordant overtones of the 'easy to recognise' phrase as correct yet crucially incomplete: to recognise the dynamics of a god at work actually remains a fundamental problem for Hektor here, as it does more generally for the other characters of the *Iliad*. Crucially, the issues inherent in such processes of recognition constitute a challenge for the epic audience as well.

What can be drawn from these two sections are two points of comparison that underline certain possibilities: the first offers the seemingly unambiguous presence of the god, the second suggests how the possibility of recognising the dynamics of a god at work remains a fundamental problem even when the fact of the god at work is correctly recognised.¹⁶⁹ Against this backdrop, the thematisation of Zeus's relations with Hektor continues to develop as the narrator renews the focus on the support of Zeus for Hektor, and the physical effects of the god upon the Trojan hero find stark illustration in the simile of Hektor raging like Ares or fire.¹⁷⁰ Next in the sequence comes Zeus's long arm; and here Zeus's involvement in Hektor's action is suddenly characterised in apparently physical terms. Viewed as the culmination of what has gone before and with the specific points of comparison in mind, this image constitutes not simply a particular vivid reinforcement of Zeus's support, but also a particular problem for the audience: they perceive the potential physicality of Zeus's assistance at this point, but are given no obvious directions

¹⁶⁸ Compare the πυκινὸν ἔπος of Zeus at *Il.* 24.75 and its 'haunting repetition' by Andromakhe at 24.744; see esp. Lynn-George (1988), 232-233; Martin (1989), 35-36; and cf. below, pp. 159-162. *Il.* 15.461 is the only instance of the πυκινὸν νόον of Zeus, and gains resonance in relation to these later instances; Janko (ed.) (1992), on 15.461-465, compares Διὸς ... νόον at *Il.* 16.688 (stronger than the ἔπος of Akhilleus in respect of Patroklos) and 17.176, and compares phrases like πυκινὸν ἔπος, μήδεα πυκνά (*Il.* 3.202) and Ζητὸς πυκινόφρονα βουλὴν (*HyHerm* 538); to which add Zeus's πυκινὰς φρένας at *Il.* 14.294 (overcome by *eros*), and the πυκινὴν ... ἐφετμήν that Thetis has given to Akhilleus at *Il.* 18.216.

¹⁶⁹ At *HomHymnAph* 167, οὐ σάφα εἰδὼς marks the extension of this motif of human ignorance of the purposes of the gods into a pointed instance of divine ignorance of the purposes of Zeus. See the discussion of Clay (1989), 166ff., esp. 180: Anchises does not 'know clearly', but neither in this instance does Aphrodite herself recognise the epoch-ending dynamics of Zeus's purpose here; thus Aphrodite's speech at 192-291 'involves more than merely recognising what stands before her eyes, but a realisation of the trap into which she has fallen'.

¹⁷⁰ See esp. *Il.* 15. 603-612.

as to how to resolve the question. Compared with the earlier 'epiphanic' presence of Apollo, Zeus's long arm is on one level only a trace of what might be possible; nevertheless, the dangers of not fully recognising the nature of divine assistance have already been highlighted as a significant problem, for the Iliadic characters, but also for the audience of the epic. Hektor is not said to see Zeus's long arm behind him or feel its contact, though he has earlier declared the ease of recognising when Zeus gives might to men. By contrast the audience themselves can 'see' the long arm of Zeus in its emergence into embodied action across the slide between power and presence, but it remains a basic question what this long arm actually signifies.

Confronted by the possible 'epiphanic' implication of this situation, the potential presence of Zeus at this point of the narrative becomes something of an interpretative challenge. Potentially relevant are two other prominent instances of a god's hand at work behind a mortal in the *Iliad*. First is Athene's pull on Akhilleus's hair in *Iliad* 1, and second is Apollo's stunning blow on Patroklos's broad back in *Iliad* 16, discussed above.¹⁷¹ In the first instance, what Athene's pull on Akhilleus's hair ultimately sets in motion is the rest of the action of the *Iliad*, and so the outcome of Athene's intervention is not the triple amount of compensation gifts from Agamemnon that is the explicit prospect held out by Athene, but instead the death of Patroklos and the anguish of Akhilleus. Lynn-George has observed that Akhilleus's decision in the face of this intervention is ἐπὶ εἰρυσσασθαι, 'which, in certain senses, both preserves and structures the *epos* as narrative', but its unforeseen consequence is also the loss of Patroklos.¹⁷² To this extent, Athene's pull on Akhilleus's hair is not so much a token of Akhilleus's status as divine favourite, as it is the beginning of his fateful quasi-deception within the framework of the plan of Zeus.¹⁷³ Akhilleus himself will gloss his own actions, and those of Agamemnon, in terms of ἄτη.¹⁷⁴ In the second instance, Apollo's blow on Patroklos's back begins that hero's unmaking; its effects on Patroklos are striking, but more important is the way that it underlines Patroklos's failure to have taken appropriate heed of the

¹⁷¹ *Il.* 1.197-198; 16.791-792

¹⁷² *Il.* 1.216. See Lynn-George (1988), 45-46; also 168-169, on the ironies of Akhilleus's acquiescence in Athene's 'promise of recompense as a future certainty': 'the accomplishment of the plan of Zeus leaves the hero prostrate in its *telos*, which coincides with loss'. Compare also Pucci ([1985] 1998d), 77: 'It is only by condemning Achilles to impotent rage that the *Iliad* fulfills itself as a poem'.

¹⁷³ Note esp. Akhilleus's own summation at *Il.* 18.79-93, esp. 82, τὸν (Patroklos) ἀπώλεσα, with Edwards (ed.) (1991), on *Il.* 18.82; cf. Slatkin (1991), 50-51. On this whole complex, see Murnaghan (1997), esp. 26-28.

¹⁷⁴ See Nagy (1990b), 254 with n. 29.

epiphanic presence of Apollo in the battle scenes that preceded this fatal one. Earlier, Apollo openly pushed Patroklos back three times, and then the fourth time, instead of a fatal blow, told Patroklos to yield; the later, fatal scene resumes this motif, explicitly repeating the formulaic frame, but this 'fourth time' Apollo, now concealed in mist, actually delivers the crucial blow that he earlier delayed.¹⁷⁵ Something of a motif emerges: a god's hand behind a mortal's back does not bode well. If the 'long arm of Zeus' is read against these examples, it takes on a more sinister overtone, which underlines Hektor's own failure in this instance to perceive the physical presence of the god despite his earlier confidence in being able to identify the god at work.¹⁷⁶ The potential 'physical presence' of the god at this point gains a particular significance in direct comparison with these other 'epiphanic' interactions between gods and mortals on the plain of Troy. When viewed in its context, the potential slide between the exercise of power by a god and that god's physical presence functions not just in terms of a 'figure of speech', but as a specific conundrum offered during a sequence of events in which the poem explores the possibilities of mortal perception with specific reference to the question of what the power and presence of the gods signifies. Even though the audience are directly aware, as Hektor is not said to be, of Zeus's activity in this instance, the challenge still remains to read Zeus's activity for its 'epiphanic' implications in the play of power and presence that arises out of the emergence of Zeus's long arm. In the specific context of the Trojan advance to the Greek ships this will, within the frame of the plan of Zeus, lead to the reintroduction of Akhilleus into battle and the death of Hektor; in such a context the embodiment of Zeus's agency in his long arm can be read as an 'epiphanic' marker foreshadowing Hektor's death.

What we end up with, then, is a scenario in which both the degree of physical presence and the extent to which this should be viewed as an 'epiphanic' event—and accordingly be compared with similar events—function as implicit challenges to the audience. To this extent, the question of 'epiphany' as such becomes something that depends in this instance upon the interplay between god, character and audience in relation to a problematic example of

¹⁷⁵ *Il.* 16.702-710, 786-787. For the 'three times, then a fourth' formula, see Bannert (1988), 40-57; Janko (ed.) (1992), on *Il.* 16.698-711, 702-6, and 784-6; Fenik (1968), 46-48; Bakker (1997), 79 n. 65: 'a sure sign of impending failure and doom'. For the climax-building sequence of events leading up to this point, see Fenik (1968), 216-217: 'The poet is elevating Patroclus' final combat and death into the realm of the gigantic and supernatural'; also Collins (1998), 41-45.

¹⁷⁶ Compare Murnaghan (1987), 70: 'The failure to recognise a god represents the point at which, for reasons he cannot know and which may have nothing to do with him, a hero has lost the gods' support'.

the presence of a god, rather than something to be determined from the self-evidence or otherwise of the physical presence of Zeus at this point. This proposition has important ramifications for how we conceive of 'epiphany' more generally. For if on the one hand the questions of visibility, perception and recognition are to be taken as crucial to a definition of what constitutes an epiphany, then an 'epiphany' as such will be treated as an object whose frame is constituted mainly in terms of the subjective awareness of a human subject. Yet on the other hand it is also the case that the rhetoric of situations involving divine presence stresses something quite different, namely the transgressive, transformative power of the gods, who operate as intentional subjects on objectified humans in ways well exemplified by Apollo's blow with downturned hand on Patroklos's back. How are these two perspectives to be reconciled? In practice the first mode, which takes the human subject as the constitutive perspective on epiphany, has tended to dominate the discussion of epiphany: the descriptive catalogue of visible 'epiphanic' features is the scholarly template of this perspective. But if one considers Zeus's 'long arm' for a moment in terms of the second mode, then alternative possibilities are thrown open. The modalities of divine presence reveal an important point here about the possibilities of failing to recognise the presence or absence of the gods in the world, about failing to identify a potential 'epiphany'. What this passage offers us, in particular, through the agency of the narrator, is the possibility for the audience to perceive the epiphanic play of the physical presence of a god in a situation where an 'epiphany' as such is not necessarily realised by the mortal character involved.

What the long arm of Zeus shows is that 'epiphany' should not be tied to unequivocal perception and recognition, and that the figurative capacity of language is vital in enabling such an unsettling moment to be brought within the narrative. The modalities of divine presence in relation to the perceptual abilities of mortals are such as to destabilise boundaries, both between the absence and presence of gods, and between the perception and non-perception of this by mortals: figurative language instantiates this destabilisation. The long arm of Zeus is not 'just a metaphor', but is a figuration of presence in a compelling and perplexing form. Some instances of divine presence might be less equivocal, but by exploring a limit-case like the long arm of Zeus the Homeric text challenges us to an awareness of the basic contingency of other ostensibly more straightforward examples. One particular implication is that too great a distinction has been maintained between divine epiphany and other modes of characterising the intersection of gods and humans in the world; that,

in more positive terms, 'divine epiphany' should be regarded as part of a continuum of ways of realising divine absence and presence that also encompasses the interpretation of signs and omens, as well as contexts such as those where power is breathed into mortals by gods, and also the forms of ritual practice and speech, such as prayer, through which the presence and absence of gods are mediated and realised. In this respect, 'divine epiphany' is not a recurrent class of event, but a loose label applied to a process that is variously instantiated in an unstable interplay of presence and perception at particular moments of interface between mortals and gods.

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... and other divine 'figures'

The long arm of Zeus points towards a set of problems within the dynamics of presence and absence of the gods, and it does so in a way that is specifically oriented towards forms of emergent physicality. This embodiment of the gods is a problem that warrants closer attention in several sections of the *Iliad*. One sequence that is particularly significant in this respect comes in *Iliad* 5, where the delimitation of the peculiar physical potentialities of the gods is explored in various ways.¹⁷⁷ I have suggested in discussing the long arm of Zeus that point of view is fundamental to the problematic of divine epiphany: the presence of gods emerges variously as a function of the differing sets of perspectives and powers of perception available to gods, mortal characters, narrator and audience of the epic. In this respect, figurative expression of divine presence plays across the boundaries of the actual and the metaphorical: what is 'seen' in such moments reflects specific (un-)awareness of the potential of divine presence and absence to substantiate metaphorical impertinence as actual. What

¹⁷⁷ For this point, see Andersen (1997), 36: 'The action around Diomedes in the fifth and sixth books is paradigmatic ... a kind of experiment in human experience'; also Kirk (ed.) (1990), 51: 'an almost philosophical interest in the confrontation between heroic nature at its highest and divine nature at its most carnal and demeaning'. For this as an *aristeia*, see Krischer (1971), 26-27.

Iliad 5 offers is a particular experiment in breaking down divisions between perspectives, especially the disjunct between characters and audience: Diomedes is given a special form of vision by Athene that replicates in key ways the perceptual ability given to the audience by the narrator's power to name and describe the actions of the gods, even when they are ostensibly unperceived by mortals within the frame of the epic itself. Diomedes' vision is given particular emphasis by the actions that it enables, with Athene's urging and assistance, especially the wounding of Aphrodite and Ares.¹⁷⁸ These encounters dramatise questions of mortal perception and divine presence in provocative ways—not least of which are parodic overtones—that have particular relevance for the embodied presence of the gods in contexts of encounter between mortals and gods.

One particular moment in this sequence underlines the importance of this section of the Iliadic narrative for considering perception and presence. Diomedes has earlier been repulsed by Apollo, and now Hektor is on the attack accompanied by Trojans. The narrator adds to this the accompaniment of Ares, in the lead together with Enyo 'holding' (ἔχουσα) Kydoimos, even as Ares himself goes now in front and now behind Hektor, wielding a monstrous spear in his hands.¹⁷⁹ Diomedes reacts to the sight with fear (τὸν δὲ ἰδὼν ῥίγησεν) and speaks to the Greeks:¹⁸⁰

- 600 ὥς τότε Τυδείδης ἀνεχάζετο, εἶπέ τε λαῶι·
 " ὦ φίλοι, οἶον δὴ θαυμάζομεν Ἑκτορα δῖον
 αἰχμητὴν τ' ἔμεναι καὶ θαρσαλέον πολεμιστήν·
 τῶι δ' αἰεὶ πᾶρ' ἔεις γε θεῶν, ὃς λοιγὸν ἀμύνει.
 καὶ νῦν οἱ πάρα κείνος Ἄρης, βροτῶι ἀνδρὶ ἐοικώς.
 605 ἀλλὰ πρὸς Τρῶας τετραμμένοι αἰὲν ὀπίσσω
 εἵκετε, μῆδὲ θεοῖς μενεαινέμεν ἱφί μάχεσθαι. "

Diomedes makes an expressly inclusive statement of what it is that he and the Greeks are facing when he begins with Greek wonder at Hektor as warrior. The marker of evidentiality (δὴ) underlines the shared nature of this general

¹⁷⁸ The wounding by Diomedes of Aphrodite, and its aftermath: *Il.* 5.329-430; of Ares: 5.846-909.

¹⁷⁹ *Il.* 5.591-595. See Kirk (ed.) (1990), on *Il.* 5.592-595, for his and the scholiast's speculations on how Enyo 'holds' Kydoimos. This is another instance in relation to figures of this sort where the not-said of Homer's narrative is tantalisingly suggestive of the far more baroque images offered by the Hesiodic *Shield*; the Homeric narrative is restrained, but in a way that evokes this potential for specific detail. Compare the comment of M. Clarke (1999), 242 n. 25, on the figure of Ἀχλὺς on Hes. *Shield* 264-270: 'There is no telling whether such exotica represent late decadence of the epic tradition or stem from old traditions which Homer draws on but does not usually make explicit.'

¹⁸⁰ *Il.* 5.600-606. Diomedes' fear, with simile: *Il.* 5.596-599.

perception and reaction (θαυμάζομεν) to Hektor's evident qualities in the field of battle.¹⁸¹ Diomedes follows this with a general statement of the frequency (αἰεὶ) of divine presence by Hektor's side, but then exemplifies this statement (καὶ νῦν) with the particular observation that κείνος Ἄρης in mortal guise stands beside Hektor in this instance.¹⁸² Here the participatory evidentiality in the general statement οἷον δὴ θαυμάζομεν is overtaken by the specific deixis of κείνος Ἄρης, and the implicit shift of emphasis from 'our' perception to 'my' perception precipitates the commands that Diomedes now gives to his men, no longer addressed as 'we' but now as 'you'. This statement by Diomedes explains to the other Greeks his fear (τὸν δὲ ἰδὼν ῥίγησε), since, although for them the most apparent referent of τὸν would be Hektor, for Diomedes it is actually Ares.¹⁸³ The play with point of view is crucial here: the audience will initially share Diomedes' perspective and take τὸν as Ares, but then be slightly disconcerted by Diomedes' opening evidential emphasis on Hektor, before seeing that this shift exemplifies exactly the point that Diomedes is making to the Greeks.¹⁸⁴ Athene's enhancement of Diomedes' sight takes particular effect at this moment in the ability of Diomedes to see Ares in mortal guise as Ares the war-god, and the poet's text plays upon this differential.

¹⁸¹ See Bakker (1997), 75-79, on δὴ and its evidential and socializing function, esp. 76: 'The involvement of the speaker and addressee is less a matter of actually *sharing an environment* than a matter of *cooperation*: ... conducting the discourse becomes an activity aimed at shared seeing, a being together in the situation created by the speaker's phrasing'. The syntax of the infinitive after οἷον δὴ θαυμάζομεν is awkward in the view of Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.601-602: he takes οἷον as exclamatory and θαυμάζομεν as imperfect, presumably in contrast with the following καὶ νῦν. Is there a particular virtue, in the context of Diomedes' immediate fear, in shifting the Greek wonder at Hektor into the past? I take it as a general statement predicated upon the present moment, and for οἷον δὴ with the present tense compare Menelaos's exclamatory reproach to Zeus at *Il.* 13.633: οἷον δὴ ἄνδρεςσι χαρίζεαι ὕβριστήσιν; and Zeus's exclamation at *Od.* 1.32: οἷον δὴ νῦ θεοὺς βροτοὶ αἰτιόωνται. On the phrase, see Janko (ed.) (1992), on 13.633-635; Edwards (ed.) (1991), on 17.586-588; N. J. Richardson (ed.) (1993), on 21.57.

¹⁸² For the apodotic use of καί, cf. Bakker (1997), 73, 79 n. 65.

¹⁸³ The flow of *Il.* 5.590-596 foregrounds Ares, esp. 5.594-596: Ἄρης δ' ἐν παλάμῃσι πελώριον ἔγχος ἐνώμα, | φοῖτα δ' ἄλλοτε μὲν πρόσθ' Ἑκτορος, ἄλλοτ' ὀπισθεν. | τὸν δὲ ἰδὼν ῥίγησε βοὴν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης.

¹⁸⁴ Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.596, misses the *productive* nature of the potential ambiguity here: 'Hektor perhaps, or Ares according to Ameis-Hentze, since Diomedes sees him too'. Pelliccia (1995), 86-87, considers the question of reference in more depth, but only to suggest that the poet is 'stonewalling', e.g. 82: 'he simply toughs out the problems raised'. By contrast, for '[s]uch self-conscious mirroring, the reflecting of our gaze in that of the young hero', see Martin (1993), 234, on the first appearance to the audience of Telemakhos at *Od.* 1.113, as θεοειδής at the very moment Telemakhos himself first sees Mentes/Athene.

What does Diomedes designate when he points to κείνος Ἄρης? Kirk observes that κείνος Ἄρης suggests in its deixis that Ares is a physical presence visible to all, at least insofar as there is an (apparently mortal) figure beside Hektor.¹⁸⁵ Presumably for Kirk it is this physical form which Diomedes alone can distinguish as a god through the medium of Athene's assistance to him. Pelliccia has taken Kirk up on precisely this point.¹⁸⁶ For Pelliccia the problem is one that the poet ultimately 'stonewalls', namely: 'whether or not there was a warrior visible to all, but only revealed as Ares to Diomedes, or an invisible Ares in the form of a warrior seen by Diomedes where his companions saw nothing'.¹⁸⁷ But should we simply acquiesce in Pelliccia's invitation to silence? There is a problem with Pelliccia's criticism of Kirk on the grounds that he 'wrongly assumes that Diomedes is scrupulously observing all the time just what is visible only to him, and what to everybody else', since the potential for differential perception is precisely what the text plays with in this sequence.¹⁸⁸ The poet does not 'stonewall', but actually foregrounds this as a problem. Pelliccia's underlying observation may be true, namely that the poet does not explain everything in complete detail, but it need not follow that in instances such as this the poet is merely trying to avoid raising problems. On the contrary, such problematic aspects of divine presence and its recognition are offered in the Homeric poems precisely as live questions in contexts where mortals come into contact with gods. What Pelliccia regards as evidence that the poet, and thus the audience, must already see Ares in human form can be read differently: the juxtaposition of Ares wielding a spear in his hands alongside Enyo 'holding' Kydoimos underlines the point that the embodied forms of the gods are realised only to a certain extent, and with specific purposes and effects.¹⁸⁹ The details of the text present only Ares' hands and his spear, features

¹⁸⁵ Kirk (ed.) (1990), on *Il.* 5.603-4. Earlier, Ares goes among the Trojans as Akamas: *Il.* 5.461-462, εἰδόμενος Ἀκάμαντι θοῶι ἡγήτορι Θρηικῶν.

¹⁸⁶ Pelliccia (1995), 87: 'I find it hard to believe that Hector progressed with some ordinary Trojan prancing around in front and in back of him with a gigantic spear; we do not see warriors thus accompanied by their own men elsewhere.' 'Hard to believe' is not a particularly useful criterion to invoke here; on 82 n. 135, Pelliccia cites with approval Dietrich (1983), with specific reference to questions of plausibility; on such notions, see above, pp. 23-25.

¹⁸⁷ Pelliccia (1995), 87; for his 'stonewalling', see above, p. 95 n. 184.

¹⁸⁸ Pelliccia (1995), 87.

¹⁸⁹ See Pelliccia (1995), 87: 'The point missed by Kirk is that Ares is in the form of a human to the poet also, as he (and Athena etc.) also are at 4.439-445'. But in this *Il.* 4 passage nothing is said of the form of Ares and Athene; Eris does emerge in fuller detail, but precisely in a form which confounds 'human' corporeality. Compare also *Il.* 5.355-363, where Aphrodite and Iris come over to Ares sitting at the left side of battle and Aphrodite borrows his horses for her return to Olympus: note here the peculiar detail

which together embody his strength in battle: the physical presence of the god emerges initially only to this extent, and that of Enyo and Kydoimos emerges only as far as their names and the problematic ἔχουσα. In this respect, the question of what κείνος Ἄρης ultimately designates is something that will remain a problem to be further explored with the tip of a spear when Diomedes is urged on by Athene to wound the war-god later in *Iliad* 5.

The terms of Athene's initial removal of the mist from Diomedes' eyes early in *Iliad* 5 suggest that her assistance is designed to enable Diomedes to look past the visible appearance of a god disguised as a mortal in order to recognise the god as such:¹⁹⁰

ἀχλὺν δ' αὖ τοι ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν ἔλον, ἣ πρὶν ἐπῆεν,
ὄφρ' εἴ γινώσκῃς ἡμὲν θεὸν ἢ δὲ καὶ ἄνδρα.
τῷ νῦν, αἶ κε θεὸς πειρώμενος ἐνθάδ' ἵκηται,
130 μὴ τι σὺ γ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖς ἀντικρὺ μάχεσθαι
τοῖς ἄλλοις· ἀτὰρ εἴ κε Διὸς θυγάτηρ Ἀφροδίτη
ἔλθῃσ' ἐς πόλεμον, τήν γ' οὐτάμεν ὀξεί χαλκῶι.

Several terms are key here: Athene wants Diomedes to be able 'to recognise clearly', εἴ γινώσκειν, god from man, in the case that a god comes to put Diomedes to the 'test', πειρώμενος.¹⁹¹ The implication of the latter is not entirely clear, but it might be thought to point to the presence of gods in disguise on the battlefield.¹⁹² What then might 'to recognise clearly', εἴ γινώσκειν, mean here so far as Diomedes is concerned? Will his specially privileged sight be able to penetrate the mortal disguise to see through to the 'true' body of Ares, whatever that might be? Or will his privileged sight be able to recognise only the fact that this apparent mortal (βροτῶι ἀνδρὶ εἰκώς) is a disguised god, whose visible man-like form appears in other respects no differently to Diomedes than it does to the other participants in the battle? A solution remains obscure. We might also wonder what is at stake in attempting to decide

that Ares' spear and horses are 'leaning on air', 5.356: ἥρι δ' ἔγχος ἐκέκλιτο καὶ ταχέ' ἵππω. Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.356, takes this to imply 'the idea of a war-god isolated in a cloud of invisibility on the edge of battle'.

¹⁹⁰ *Il.* 5.127-132.

¹⁹¹ For the absolute use of πειράομαι, which *LSJ* s.v. πειράω, B.II.3, glosses as 'to try one's fortune, try the chances of war' while citing this passage. See also *Il.* 16.590 with the gloss given by Janko (ed.) (1992), on 16.588-592: 'πειρώμενος means "trying his strength"'.

¹⁹² Sch. A on *Il.* 5.129 glosses πειρώμενος with alternatives: ἀπόπειραν ποιούμενος, ἢ πειρώμενος λανθάνειν ἐν ἀνθρώπου μορφῇ; Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.127-130, repeats and amplifies the second: 'For gods often come in disguise—that must be the implication of πειρώμενος in 129, since a god does not *make trial* of a mortal by appearing manifestly on the battlefield'.

between such alternatives: each possible response will imply certain propositions about the modalities of the physical presence of gods.

The deixis of Diomedes' language here reinforces the problem of denomination that is introduced by the figures of Ares, Enyo and Kydoimos, but does not resolve it for the audience of the epic, nor indeed for the Greeks on the battlefield before Troy. Certainly his words have a specific effect on their primary audience: the audience of the epic knew already of the presence of Ares through the narrator, but now the Greeks themselves know of the presence of Ares on the battlefield. A little later, this knowledge on their part is made explicit:¹⁹³

700 Ἄργεῖοι δ' ὑπ' Ἀρηϊ καὶ Ἑκτορι χαλκοκορυστῇ
οὔτε ποτε προτρέποντο μελαινάων ἐπὶ νηῶν
οὔτε ποτ' ἀντεφέροντο μάχηι, ἀλλ' αἰὲν ὀπίσσω
χάζονθ', ὥς ἐπύθοντο μετὰ Τρώεσσιν Ἀρηα.

Here the Greeks are said to be aware (ἐπύθοντο) of the god, just as Diomedes has told them, as they tactically retreat in the face of Ares and Hektor.¹⁹⁴ But the force of this verb is to suggest that their knowledge of Ares as such is dependent not upon their own perceptions, but upon Diomedes' 'recognition' which is itself dependent upon the special conditions that Athene has created, a point that Diomedes makes himself in response to aggressive words from Athene later in *Iliad* 5.¹⁹⁵ There the key term of Diomedes' 'recognition' of the gods is repeated: γινώσκω σε ... γινώσκω γὰρ Ἀρηα.¹⁹⁶ Again perception is foregrounded as a basic problem in contexts of divine presence, though in this latter instance the problem is raised in the specific context of Diomedes' competitive claim that he can recognise the gods, a claim that recalls in a suggestive fashion the competitive interaction between Athene and Odysseus on the shore of Ithaca in *Odyssey* 13.¹⁹⁷ There also the perspicuity of mortal vision is a central topic, not least how to recognise the goddess, as Athene

¹⁹³ *Il.* 5.699-702.

¹⁹⁴ Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.699-702, notes the consistency of this passage with what has gone before and what will come after, as also remarked by sch. bT; cf. Pelliccia (1995), 87 n. 143.

¹⁹⁵ *Il.* 5.815-824. See Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.815-824, for the point that Diomedes 'defends himself ... partly by quoting back at Athene her earlier instructions'.

¹⁹⁶ *Il.* 5.815, 824. For the Odyssean parallels in this speech, esp. γινώσκω σε, θεά with Athene's words to Odysseus, οὐδὲ σύ γ' ἔγνωσ' Ἰ Παλλάδ' Ἀθηναίην, at *Od.* 13.299-300, see Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.816.

¹⁹⁷ See esp. Athene's speech, *Od.* 13.287-310, and Odysseus's response, 13.311-328. Note 13.312-313: ἀργαλέον σε, θεά, γνῶναι βροτῶι ἀντιάσαντι ἰ καὶ μάλ' ἐπισταμένωι· σε γὰρ αὐτὴν παντὶ εἴσκεις; and Odysseus's reproachful continuation that Athene had not stood by him after Troy was sacked; see esp. Clay (1983).

surrounds Odysseus with an obscuring veil of air (περὶ ... ἥερα χεῦε), just as in this Iliadic instance she has removed the mist (ἀχλὺν ... ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν) from Diomedes' eyes.¹⁹⁸ But here, by contrast with the superior knowledge of the audience of *Odyssey* 13, what Diomedes' competitive claim reinforces is the audience's exclusion from full access to this particular set of privileged interactions between mortal and god. In key respects this is similar to the Akhilleus-Athene scene in *Iliad* 1, whose exclusionary modalities I have discussed earlier. The impact of that scene lies in its play across the different perceptual abilities of the various participants in the narrative, not least the audience of the epic. In a similar way, Diomedes' deixis of κεῖνος Ἄρης, βροτῶι ἀνδρὶ εἰκώς, constitutes a challenge to the audience to imagine what this might actually be, rather than a simple revelation of how Diomedes actually perceives the presence of the god.

A characteristic moment in the dynamics of the competitive scene between Athene and Diomedes comes when Diomedes refocuses attention upon the Greeks around him:¹⁹⁹

τούνεκα νῦν αὐτός τ' ἀναχάζομαι ἡδὲ καὶ ἄλλους
 Ἀργείους ἐκέλευσα ἀλήμεναι ἐνθάδε πάντας·
 γινώσκω γὰρ Ἄρηι μάχην ἀνὰ κοιρανέοντα.

Here Diomedes makes explicit the physical context of his exchange with Athene, which has been latent from the point when the two goddesses Athene and Here came 'like doves' into the midst of the Greeks where they stood 'massed' around Diomedes: ὅθι πλείστοι καὶ ἄριστοι | ἕστασαν ἀμφὶ βίην Διομήδεος ἵπποδάμοιο | εἰλόμενοι.²⁰⁰ There is a significant point here: the exchange between Athene and Diomedes does not take place like that between Athene and Odysseus within an obscuring fog on the deserted shore of Ithaka, but in the midst of a defensive massed retreat on the plain of Troy inspired by Athene's own instructions to Diomedes. It is to this fact that Diomedes draws attention when he tells Athene how he ordered all the rest 'to mass together in this place' (ἀλήμεναι ἐνθάδε), repeating as he does the key term 'massed' (εἰλόμενοι) from the earlier description of the situation into which Here and Athene inserted themselves.²⁰¹ Contrary to what Kirk and Pelliccia have suggested, the other Greeks are not left out of account throughout the

¹⁹⁸ Odysseus: *Od.* 13.189; and its dispersal, 13.352. Diomedes: *Il.* 5.127.

¹⁹⁹ *Il.* 5.822-824.

²⁰⁰ Doves: *Il.* 5.778. The massed Greeks: 5.780-782.

²⁰¹ For the verb and its meaning in the passive (ἀλήμεναι is 2nd aor. pass. inf.), see *LSJ* s.v. εἶλω B.

encounter between Athene and Diomedes, but are specifically reintroduced by Diomedes at this point.²⁰² Diomedes' words are an invitation both to Athene and to the audience themselves to refocus attention upon the situation at hand, and in doing this Diomedes reinforces his own special status: γινώσκω σε, θεά. What, by contrast, can the Greeks see of Athene? Apparently nothing, even as the goddess herself shoves Sthenelos with her hand out of Diomedes' chariot and gets in herself.²⁰³

835 ὥς φαμένη Σθένελον μὲν ἀφ' ἵππων ὥσε χαμᾶζε
χειρὶ πάλιν ἐρύσασ', ὃ δ' ἄρ' ἐμπαπέως ἀπόρουσεν·
ἢ δ' ἐς δίφρον ἔβαινε παραὶ Διομήδεα δῖον
ἐμμεμαῖα θεά· μέγα δ' ἔβραχε φήγινος ἄξων
βριθοσύνηι· δεινὴν γὰρ ἄγεν θεὸν ἄνδρά τ' ἄριστον.

The narrator highlights the physicality of the goddess's presence in the externalised, objectified detail of the groaning axle, even while the question of how the presence of the goddess is realised is left largely unresolved. The audience shares Diomedes' privileged perspective here, in contrast to the other Greeks, but they share it only so far.

The narrator's ability to control what the audience 'see' takes on a similarly competitive edge elsewhere in *Iliad* 5. Before Here and Athene descend to the battlefield, the narrator tantalises with a glimpse of Athene disrobing in Zeus's house before her arming scene on Olympus:²⁰⁴

αὐτὰρ Ἀθηναίη κούρη Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο
πέπλον μὲν κατέχευεν ἑανὸν πατρὸς ἐπ' οὐδαι
735 ποικίλον, ὃν ῥ' αὐτὴ ποιήσατο καὶ κάμε χερσίν·

²⁰² Pelliccia (1995), 275-276, criticises as 'inadequate' Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.794-795, where Kirk cites Fenik (1968), 75, and comments that the thronging Greeks are disregarded since 'it is an epic narrative convention that long, isolated conversations can take place in the midst of battle'. Pelliccia sees the isolated nature of the exchange between Athene and Diomedes (i.e. that Diomedes alone sees Athene) as a result of syncope (in this instance, Diomedes's wound), which he argues, 273-277, is the key circumstance in which heroes see gods; Pelliccia cites the encounter between Akhilleus and Athene in *Il.* 1 as the exception to the rule, where the poet explicitly states that the goddess was visible to Akhilleus alone; by Pelliccia's reasoning this encounter needs explanation because Akhilleus is not wounded at that point. Pelliccia argues that "'twilight" periods of consciousness are in later tradition regarded as time ripe for visions', and that this 'belief presumably lies behind the timing of many Homeric interventions in general'. This is too reductive.

²⁰³ *Il.* 5.835-839. For the heightened language, see Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.835-836 and 838-839.

²⁰⁴ *Il.* 5.733-737 = 8.384-388. See now Llewellyn-Jones (2001), 244: these lines show the 'reluctance of Athena to display her body'; he suggests that the swiftness of the change means that 'there is no place for dwelling on what happens in the moments between the πέπλος hitting the floor and the fastening of the χιτῶν', but this desire to 'dwell' is in fact the larger point that he is illustrating, esp. 254-257. This applies no less here.

ἡ δὲ χιτῶν' ἐνδύσα Διὸς νεφεληγερέταο
τεύχεσιν ἐς πόλεμον θωρήσσετο δακρυόεντα.

The daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus lets her *peplos* fall to the father's floor before she takes up the cloud-gatherer's *khiton* and arms for war. Kirk observes that the point is Athene's transformation for war in these and the following lines, but the details are curious.²⁰⁵ What does the audience see here? The goddess's πέπλος is foregrounded, by its initial position and its runover adjective, but her body emerges at this point only so far as the hands: it is with these hand that the goddess has made the πέπλος, and it is the description of this handiwork that conceals her in the flow of narrative even as it falls to the ground.²⁰⁶ What follows is an arming scene, albeit with divine accoutrements, and over the structuring frame of the goddess's hands, shoulders, head and feet the image builds up of the goddess's martial power embodied in the terrifying objects that she wears and bears: the dread tassled aegis, wreathed with Terror, on which stand Strife, Strength, Rout, and the Gorgon-head; the helmet 'fitted with the foot-soldiers of a hundred towns'; the flaming chariot into which Athene steps; the huge spear.²⁰⁷ The extravagance of detail in the depiction of Athene in this arming scene is counterbalanced by the provocative reticence of her disrobing: the sight of the goddess herself is concealed first by the πέπλος itself and then by her father's χιτῶν, then she is subsumed beneath the arms themselves. The goddess emerges in embodied form, but only so far and for particular effect, even within the frame of Olympos and the house of Zeus.

Questions about the anthropomorphic forms of the gods take on a greater urgency in the scenes where Diomedes wounds Aphrodite and Ares. That the two gods manifest a basically anthropomorphic form in these passages is evident. Diomedes strikes and wounds Aphrodite on the hand: ἄκρην οὔτασε

²⁰⁵ See Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.734-737, for discussion of the ancient critical reactions to these lines here and at 8.384-388.

²⁰⁶ Compare Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.734-737: 'a voluptuous description and movement, tempered by the reminder that she had made it herself, i.e. as goddess of handiwork'. Perhaps what this detail suggests is Athene's virgin status; contrast the πέπλος that Aphrodite wears at *Il.* 5.338, made by the Graces. With Athene here, compare and contrast the appearance (in maidenly guise) of Aphrodite before Ankhises in *HomHymAphr* 81-90 (θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι); but again the narrator is reticent at the moment of disrobing, 164-167, playfully marked with a comment on the ignorance of Ankhises (οὐ σάφα εἰδώς) which applies equally well to the audience of the hymn; as if to point up the contrast, when Aphrodite re-robes at 171-175 she reemerges in an embodied form as the goddess: αὐτὴ δὲ χροῖ ἔννυτο εἴματα καλά. Ἰέσσαμένη δ' εὖ πάντα περὶ χροῖ διαθεάων ἔστη ἄρα κλισίῃ, εὐποιήτοιο μελάρου ἰκῦρε κάρη, κάλλος δὲ παρειῶν ἀπέλαμπεν ἰμβροτον, οἷόν τ' ἐστὶν εὖστεφάνου Κυthereίης.

²⁰⁷ *Il.* 5.738-747. On the elaborate details of these objects see Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.738-742, 743-744, 745-747.

χείρα.²⁰⁸ Athene drives Diomedes' spear on at Ares, νείατον ἐς κενεῶνα, ὅθι ζωνύσκετο μήτηρ, a serious site of wounding in the battle-scenes of the *Iliad*.²⁰⁹ On the most prominent instance of such a wound, Janko comments laconically that 'the blow to Patroklos' flank is typical'.²¹⁰ This typicality is quite specific: that such a blow is a *mortal* wound is the point of what Pandaros has said earlier in *Iliad* 5 about a wound κενεῶνα διαμπερές, and of what Paris/Alexandros will say later in *Iliad* 11 of a wound νείατον ἐς κενεῶνα, and this will be exactly the effect when Hektor drives his spear into Patroklos, νείατον ἐς κενεῶνα.²¹¹ To this extent Ares's wound here may be expressed in typical language, but its connotations are pointedly not 'typical'. Instead, the use of this phrase focuses the problem of the wounding of the god in a particular way, as the narrator uses the body language of *mortal* combat in describing the wounding of Ares by Diomedes and Athene. The adoption here of mortal body language marks the wounding of Ares specifically in relation to the paradoxical question of divine mortality, a theme already raised in *Iliad* 5 in the consolation speech made by Dione to Aphrodite.²¹² In the context of such pointed usage, what is being suggested here about the body of the god?

A scholion on the Ares passage responds to a similar question when it highlights a potential problem in the wounding of Ares in accordance with the familiar ancient critical principle, "Ὅμηρον ἔξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν, since in the view of the scholiast there is an apparent contradiction between the human warrior-like figure of the god which the adoption of the 'typical' formulas of battle-narrative here presupposes, and Ares' huge size when he is later knocked down by Athene in the battle between the gods in *Iliad* 21.²¹³

²⁰⁸ *Il.* 5.336.

²⁰⁹ *Il.* 5.857. The phrase νείατον ἐς κενεῶνα recurs also at *Il.* 11.381, 16.821 (Hektor striking Patroklos); κενεῶνα at *Il.* 5.284 and *Od.* 22.295.

²¹⁰ Janko (ed.) (1992), on 16.818-822.

²¹¹ Pandaros's words: *Il.* 5.284-285, βέβληται κενεῶνα διαμπερές, οὐδέ σ' οἶω ἰδηρὸν ἔτ' ἀνσχήσεσθαι· ἐμοὶ δὲ μέγ' εὖχος ἔδωκας. Paris/Alexandros's words: *Il.* 11.380-381, βέβλεαι, οὐδ' ἄλιον βέλος ἔκφυγεν· ὥς ὄφελόν τοι ἰνείατον ἐς κενεῶνα βαλὼν ἐκ θυμὸν ἐλέσθαι.

²¹² Ares: *Il.* 5.385-391, esp. 5.388, καὶ νύ κεν ἔνθ' ἀπόλοιτο Ἄρης ἄτος πολέμοιο. On Dione's catalogue, see below, pp. 108-111.

²¹³ Sch. bT on *Il.* 5.857. The maxim is commonly associated with the Alexandrian scholar, Aristarkhos; Pfeiffer (1968), 225-227, concludes that the words themselves go back only to Porphyry (see Schrader (ed.) (1880), 297.16f.: ἀξιῶν δὲ ἐγὼ "Ὅμηρον ἔξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν αὐτὸν ἐξηγούμενον ἑαυτὸν ὑπεδείκνυσιν, ποτὲ μὲν παρακειμένως, ἄλλοτε δ' ἐν ἄλλοις); cf. N. J. Richardson (ed.) (1993), 46-47; others speculate further back than Aristarkhos, towards an unknown fifth century sophist: see N. G. Wilson (1971); G. Lee (1975); N. G. Wilson (1976).

εἰ οὖν ἐπταπέλεθρος ὁ Ἄρης (cf. Φ 407), πῶς φθάνει τὸ δόρυ Διομήδους
τρία πλέθρα; ὅτι νῦν ἀνδρὶ εἵκασται· " καὶ νῦν οἱ πάρα κείνος Ἄρης
βροτῶι ἀνδρὶ ἐοικώς " (E 604).

In the rhythm of didactic question and response, a solution is quickly presented by the scholiast, namely Ares' man-like disguise as he advanced earlier in *Iliad* 5 at the side of Hektor. The scholiast thus articulates a contrast between the 'mortal' and 'divine' forms of Ares in these two passages, and the 'mortal' wounding is rendered possible by Ares' mortal guise. But if we compare the two divine wounding scenes in *Iliad* 5, this attempt to rationalise Ares' body-language becomes complicated, since Aphrodite, by contrast, is not in disguise when she comes to rescue her son Aineias. In that instance, although what Diomedes 'recognises' is specifically Aphrodite's particular identity as a 'might-less' goddess, γινώσκων ὃ τ' ἀναλκίς ἔην θεός, instead of a particular aspect of the goddess's physical presence, the bodily presence of the goddess does emerge into focus.²¹⁴ When Aphrodite protects Aineias from Diomedes, this protection is embodied in her white arms and the fold of her bright πέπλος:²¹⁵

315 ἀμφὶ δ' ἔδον φίλον υἱὸν ἐχέυατο πήχεε λευκῶ,
πρόσθε δέ οἱ πέπλοιο φαεινοῦ πτύγμ' ἐκάλυψε
ἔρκος ἔμεν βελέων, μή τις Δαναῶν ταχυπῶλων
χαλκὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι βαλὼν ἐκ θυμὸν ἔλοιτο.

Kirk notes the unusual form of this rescue, especially the 'pouring' of her pale arms around Aineias.²¹⁶ Here the goddess's rescue is expressed in a particular form that has continued significance, since when Diomedes attacks her he drives his spear through Aphrodite's ambrosial πέπλος and into her wrist (πρυμνὸν ὑπὲρ θέναρος).²¹⁷ The specificity of the wound picks up the unusual, embodied form of Aineias's rescue, as if to highlight the goddess's vulnerability to Diomedes' spear. But what now of the distinction made by the scholiast on the Ares passage between the 'real' and disguised forms of the divine body in explicating such mortal body-language? In the case of Ares the scholiast explained the anthropomorphism of the wounding in terms of the mortal guise

²¹⁴ *Il.* 5.331-332: γινώσκων ὃ τ' ἀναλκίς ἔην θεός, οὐδὲ θεάων | τάων αἵ τ' ἀνδρῶν
πόλεμον κάτα κοιρανέουσιν, | οὐτ' ἄρ' Ἀθηναίη οὔτε Πτολίπορθος Ἐνυώ. The term
ἀναλκίς is coupled with ἀπτόλεμος at *Il.* 2.201 and 9.35; for αλκή, see Collins (1998).

²¹⁵ *Il.* 5.314-317.

²¹⁶ Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.314-315: 'Aphrodite's rescue technique is unparalleled', citing Fenik (1968), 39, where Fenik discusses the concentration of unusual 'supernatural' events in *Il.* 5.

²¹⁷ *Il.* 5.335-339: ἔνθ' ἐπορεξάμενος μεγαθύμου Τυδέος υἱός | ἄκρην οὔτασε χεῖρα
μετάλμενος ὀξείῃ δουρί | ἀβληχρήν· εἶθα δὲ δόρυ χροὸς ἀντετόρησεν | ἀμβροσίου διὰ
πέπλου, ὃν οἱ Χάριτες κάμον αὐταί, | πρυμνὸν ὑπὲρ θέναρος. For the detail that the
Graces have made this πέπλος, contrast Athene's πέπλος at 5.735; see above, pp. 100-
101.

adopted by the god. Here, by contrast, there is no such disguise. So is what Diomedes attacks here actually the 'real' body of the goddess?

A scholion on this very passage where Diomedes wounds Aphrodite suggests exactly this, and in doing so operates with the same implicit distinction between 'real' and 'false' bodies that is developed in the scholion on the wounding of Ares. The scholiast comments that the nature of the wound to the tip of Aphrodite's hand is due to the great stature of the goddess: τοῦτο πρὸς τὸ μέγεθος τῆς θεοῦ· καὶ ἐπάλμενος γὰρ μόγις τὴν ἄκρην χεῖρα ἔτρωσεν, ὅτι μετέωρος ἦν ἡ θεός.²¹⁸ Here, the scholiast is inferring from the absence of any explicit disguise that the object of Diomedes' attack is in fact the authentic body of the goddess, and that the language used here of Aphrodite is 'divine' body-language that is to be distinguished in terms of its sheer size, at least, from the 'mortal' body-language used in the case of Ares in *Iliad* 5. For the scholiast, Aphrodite's body-language is to be understood like the 'divine' body-language of Ares in the battle between the gods in *Iliad* 21.²¹⁹ The problem which the text raises for the scholiast here is the opposite of that which puzzled the scholiast quoted above on the wounding of Ares: where the wounding in the latter passage was regarded as being made feasible by Ares' mortal guise, here the wounding is to be explicated by the converse situation, namely Aphrodite's lack of mortal guise. The two solutions are consistent with each other in their respective explications of the body-language of the two gods in terms of the presence or absence of disguise in either case, and what is implied is a distinction between the authentic and the false bodies of the gods. But, given that the outcome of both attacks is largely identical, we might wonder what significance such a distinction actually has for the bodies of the gods?

In the event itself, the distinction between authentic and false bodies is of little consequence in respect of the physical outcomes of Diomedes' attacks on both gods. Whether Aphrodite and Ares have different types of body at this point does not result in any distinction between the types of wound they receive from the spear of Diomedes: both suffer a penetrative wound from which their ἄμβροτον αἶμα then flows.²²⁰ If the body of Aphrodite here is to be understood as 'authentic' and the body of Ares as 'false', what does it mean that Diomedes' spear can in both cases penetrate in this way and release the flow of

²¹⁸ Sch. bT on *Il.* 5.335-336.

²¹⁹ *Il.* 21.407: ἐπτα δ' ἐπέσχε πέλεθρα πεσών; cf. sch. bT on *Il.* 5.857, quoted above, p. 102-103.

²²⁰ Aphrodite *Il.* 5.339-340. Ares: *Il.* 5.870.

this divinely corporeal substance? There is a basic problem here: how do we understand the 'anthropomorphism' of divine guises, given the fluidity that is inherent in the divine potential for metamorphosis?²²¹ In situations of (dis)guise, where is the 'body' of the god located exactly?

Such questions direct attention towards the persistent complexities that recur in the interaction between divine corporeality, divine power, and divine presence. The importance of this complexity is underlined by its persistence even in a situation like this where Diomedes has been granted a special form of vision—which might have been supposed to offer particular insight into the ontology of divine presence.²²² On one level this ontology is precisely what the episodes in *Iliad* 5 explore, but even as the (divine) bodies of Aphrodite and Ares are subjected to the exploratory tip of Diomedes' spear new questions present themselves. Of course, it cannot be questioned that the gods are frequently presented in the Homeric epics in terms of a bodily code that is closely related to that exhibited by the mortal characters of the epics. Vernant observes how 'in order to think of the divine life and body, the required reference or point of departure for the Greeks is this defective body'.²²³ In related forms, this is not a new theme of Homeric scholarship. We may compare key elements of Eustathius' summary of the features of the Homeric gods: σωματώδεις αὐτοὺς πλάττει καὶ ἀνθρωποπαθεῖς.²²⁴ And long before this lies the critique of Homeric and Hesiodic anthropomorphism, as it is pithily formulated by Xenophanes, for example.²²⁵ But antiquity's concern to uncover

²²¹ See Severyns (1966), 56, and Fauth (1975), 235, for 'le pouvoir de la métamorphose' and 'die Macht der Metamorphose'; but for the further point that what underlies this power is in fact a radical absence of a 'true' or 'normal' appearance, see W. Smith (1988); Smith seeks, 161, to maintain a sense of 'the utter alienation of divine from mortal in appearance and nature'; cf. Vernant ([1986] 1991a), 43: 'In order to manifest his presence, the divinity chooses to make himself visible in the form of a body, rather than *his* or *her* body'. For divine (dis)guise as precisely the adoption of *human* body and voice, viz. δέμας and αὐδή, see Clay (1974); for more on the different 'voice' words in Homer, see Ford (1992), 172-197. Implicated here is the dispute over gods as powers and gods as personalities (and thus 'bodies') as mapped out between Vernant and Burkert; see Bremmer (1994), 22-23, and compare e.g. Vernant ([1986] 1991a) and Burkert (1985), 183ff.

²²² The supposition, e.g. Clay (1983), 171, that *Il.* 18.517-519 shows the gods as perceived by gods, oversimplifies the scene. The gods are gold, wear gold, are beautiful and large 'like gods', are 'conspicuous': ἄμφω χρυσεῖω, χρύσεια δὲ εἴματα ἔσθην, ἰ καλῶ καὶ μεγάλῳ σὺν τεύχεσιν, ὥς τε θεῶ περ, ἰ ἀμφὶς ἀριζήλῳ. This is ekphrastic punning, and in this play of object and image the ontology of the gods is not simply revealed: see Barkan (1986), 10.

²²³ Vernant ([1986] 1991a), 33-34.

²²⁴ Eustathius 38, 4ff. van der Valk, on *Il.* 1.43.

²²⁵ See esp. Xenophanes B10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16 D-K; for discussion and bibliography, see Leshner (ed.) (1992), 81-94, 114-119.

the rationale behind the forms of the Homeric gods should not mislead us into assuming that this recurrent anthropomorphism necessarily has the character of an ontologically denominative description.²²⁶ For the apparent relationship between divine and human bodies is of a peculiar character in these contexts. Divine body language is marked in particular by the negation of basic aspects of the human body: this has been a key contribution of the analyses of the divine body by Clay, Loraux and Vernant.²²⁷ Thus when Diomedes wounds Aphrodite and Ares, what flows is their ἄμβροτον αἶμα, their 'Nichtblutsblut', which is itself then named as ἰχώρ.²²⁸ In the case of the wounding of Aphrodite this substance is further explicated by the Homeric narrator in terms themselves marked by the repetition and shift into the generalising present tense of the verb that is used to characterise the liquid flow of this 'Nichtblutsblut':²²⁹

ῥέε δ' ἄμβροτον αἶμα θεοῖο,
 340 ἰχώρ, οἷός περ τε ῥέει μακάρεσσι θεοῖσιν.
 οὐ γὰρ σῖτον ἔδουσ', οὐ πίνουσ' αἴθοπα οἶνον·
 τούνεκ' ἀναίμονές εἰσι καὶ ἀθάνατοι καλέονται.

Negatives cluster here, in consequence of the 'difficult state' that immortality constitutes.²³⁰ This negative logic is highlighted by Loraux, especially in the play latent in ἄμβροτον αἶμα, between βρότος, designating specifically the blood from a wound, and βροτός, the characteristic epithet of mortality:²³¹

Du sang qui n'en est pas, de la substance de mortel à l'état immortel: entre la glose étymologique et la réflexion sur l'essence négative du divin, qui distinguera jamais?

²²⁶ See esp. Frontisi-Ducroux (1986b), 193: 'L'anthropomorphisme constitue la caractéristique majeure de la figuration, pour les Grecs, du divin. Mais ni l'affirmation d'Hérodote ni la dominante effective de l'anthropomorphisme ne signifient que les Grecs considéraient que les hommes et les dieux étaient semblables. Toute la religion grecque s'attache, au contraire, à marquer les écarts et à dessiner les frontières entre la race des dieux et celle des hommes.'

²²⁷ Clay (1981-1982); Loraux (1986b), 335-354; Vernant ([1986] 1991a), 27-49.

²²⁸ Aphrodite: *Il.* 5.339. Ares: 5.870. On ἄμβροτον αἶμα see Leumann (1950), 124-127; Bernadete (1968), 34; Clay (1981-1982), 113-114; Clay (1983), 143-144 and n. 26; Loraux (1986b), 352-3 and n. 49. Kirk (ed.) (1990), on *Il.* 5.416, suggests that ἰχώρ might have seemed a 'suitable pseudo-technical term'; cf. Heubeck (1949-1950), 212-214. In any case, the doubled naming here, ἄμβροτον αἶμα and ἰχώρ, must be considered in relation to divine and human namings in Homer (even if it is not 'explicitly ascribe[d] to the language of the gods'; for this point and a subtle discussion of divine/human naming, see Clay (1972), esp. 127, 131): it is precisely ἰχώρ and not ἄμβροτον αἶμα that Dione wipes away at *Il.* 5.416 when Aphrodite is back among the company of the gods. By contrast, Jouanna and Demont (1981), 199-204, maintain that the use here *is* technical, and consistent with the usage in the Hippocratic corpus.

²²⁹ *Il.* 5.339-342.

²³⁰ This phrase is used by Vermeule (1979), 121-122. For such negative language, see esp. Clay (1981-1982); cf. Chantraine (1968-1977), s.v. βροτός, νέκταρ. Note also the formula ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρως at *Od.* 5.218, with Janko (1981) on its linguistic ancestry.

²³¹ Loraux (1986b), 353.

The divine body according to this analysis constitutes something of an anti-body, which is marked by both its proximity to and difference from the human body. Vernant puts it this way: 'the result is that the gods actually transgress the strict corporeal code by means of which they are represented in their relations to humans'.²³² But in this combination of proximity and difference, this transgression is of a special character. The point is that the divine body is not so much the opposite of the human body in a dialectical sense, as it is instead a pervasive negation of the validity and power of the human body and corporeal code: the divine body precedes, exceeds and supercedes. In this negation, opposites do not stand in a dialectical relation that confirms their mutual places in the world, but rather they approach one another in a state of far greater unease, in which 'opposites are not reconciled, but held together in their belonging apart'.²³³ This is a negative relation that persists in its negativity to the extent that it ultimately denies the validity of the relation itself. Divine substance and presence are analogous to human substance and presence, and yet they fundamentally transcend the terms of the analogy. The 'divine body' constitutes simultaneously an inversion and a *denial* of human bodily values. Accordingly, the (ana)logic of anthropomorphism leaves a gap, and in this gap lies much that is fundamental to the potentialities of divine presence and substance. In the presence of this gap, the modalities of divine presence always have the potential to exceed a simple physicality or corporeality.²³⁴ These scenes in *Iliad* 5 explore how divine presence may draw directly upon the human corporeal code, even as it overturns the terms of the analogy.

The emergent embodiments of Aphrodite and Ares, and the special vision and assistance afforded Diomedes by Athene, come together on the battlefield in moments of direct confrontation between mortal and divine. This is a theme which will not recede in importance later in the *Iliad*, especially in the key sequences of combat between Apollo, Patroklos, Hektor and Euphorbos, and between Akhilleus, Hektor and Athene. The suggestion that the position of the gods can somehow be maintained (only?) by the reinforcement of the mortality of humans, and in particular the mortality of Akhilleus, is a live

²³² Vernant ([1986] 1991a), 31.

²³³ For the quotation, see Taylor (1999), 32, on 'denegation'. A classic dialectical formulation of divine/human relations is that of Reinhardt ([1960] 1997a), 179-181; but Reinhardt does approach its pervasive negativity, 181: 'The "as if" of human existence is permanence, the "as if" of divine existence is annihilation'.

²³⁴ The gods are not incorporeal either: see Renehan (1980), 108-109, on the cap of Hades at *Il.* 5.845.

current flowing through the depictions of such encounters between divine and human in the *Iliad*.²³⁵ Compare what Aphrodite says to Dione:²³⁶

οὐ γὰρ ἔτι Τρώων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν φύλοπις αἰνὴ,
380 ἄλλ' ἥδη Δαναοὶ γε καὶ ἀθανάτοισι μάχονται.

Aphrodite implies that the battle is somehow exceeding its designated bounds, namely Trojan against Greek.²³⁷ That a larger context of divine-human conflict is active in the encounters between Diomedes, Aphrodite, and Ares in *Iliad* 5 is marked at several points. Aphrodite complains to Ares that Diomedes in his present form would fight even Zeus: Τυδείδης, ὅς νῦν γε καὶ ἂν Διὶ πατρὶ μάχοιτο.²³⁸ Dione's consolatory speech to the wounded Aphrodite lists several similar incidents and points darkly to possible consequences.²³⁹ And this theme of human conflict with the gods is picked up by Diomedes himself in his subsequent encounter with Glaukos, when he raises the example of Lykourgos.²⁴⁰ The scene between Dione and Aphrodite is of particular

²³⁵ See esp. Murnaghan (1997); Slatkin (1991), esp. 101-102: 'The price of Zeus's hegemony is Achilles' death'; Redfield ([1975] 1994), 241: 'Achilles is ... the consequence of a onetime solution to a problem of cosmic order'. On the potential for *change* in the ordering of the cosmos, see Heiden (1997), 228-229. For the epochal role of the Trojan War in the demarcation of mortal and immortal, see Nagy ([1979] 1999), 219-220; Scodel (1982), 35-40; Clay (1989), 166-170; but esp. Slatkin (1991), 118-122, for the distinctive Iliadic approach: 'a paradigmatic explanation of why human beings, in order not to threaten to be greater than their divine parents, must die'. Other than the *Iliad* compare esp. Hesiod fr. 204.95ff. MW; for discussion of this problematic fragment, see M. L. West (1961), 133-136; Stiewe (1963); Koenen (1984), 26-34; M. L. West (1985), 119-121; but Scodel (1982), 37-38, is right to underline the difficulty (West and Koenen are less diffident) of resolving the reference of the μάκαρες in Hes. fr. 204.102-104 MW: the gods themselves, or the heroes?

²³⁶ *Il.* 5.379-380.

²³⁷ The entry of the gods into battle with its cosmic effects, *Il.* 20.1-74, and the ensuing battle between the gods in *Il.* 21, are developments of this. Griffin (1980), 185, compares *Il.* 20.56-65 with Hes. *Theog.* 847-852, to point up what he later, 199, terms a 'sublime frivolity'; cf. Schein (1984), 51, 65 n. 16. Likewise Burkert (1985), 122, calls it 'a harmless farce'; cf. Pucci (2002), 27. But these verdicts should not obscure the potential for perturbation of the cosmos that is an active theme at these points; note esp. the reply of Apollo to Poseidon, *Il.* 21.462-469.

²³⁸ *Il.* 5.362. Her complaint as a whole, 5.359-362, mobilises this theme of human/divine conflict: Aphrodite seeks Olympus, ἵν' ἀθανάτων ἔδος ἐστί, as a refuge from the wound which this βροτὸς ἀνὴρ has inflicted upon her. Nagy ([1979] 1999), 143-144, comments on the designation δαίμονι ἴσος, used of Diomedes (5.439, 459, 884), Patroklos (16.705-786) and Akhilleus (20.447): 'the deployment of this epithet coincides with the climax of ritual antagonism between the god and hero'; cf. Scodel (1992), 81: the phrase 'seems thereby linked to theomachy'.

²³⁹ Dione's speech: *Il.* 5.381-415. The consolatory power of the speech itself is instantiated immediately by Dione in the wiping away of the ἔχωρ and the self-renewal of Aphrodite's hand at 5.416-417. See Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.417, for the expression ἀλθετο χεῖρ.

²⁴⁰ Diomedes on Lykourgos: *Il.* 6.130-140. Diomedes' words mobilise the audience's awareness of Dione's speech. Andersen (1978), 98, points to the verbal parallelism of *Il.* 5.407 (οὐ δηναίως, ὅς ...) with 6.130-131 (οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδὲ ... δὴν ἦν, ὅς ...) and 6.139-

importance, where Dione catalogues several examples of gods who have endured the attacks of impious mortals.²⁴¹ This scene may well reflect other epic material as well as a specific Near Eastern heritage in its form and content, but more important here is how this material functions within its immediate Iliadic context as part of a demarcation of divine and human 'spheres of action'.²⁴² Andersen may be right to stress the ad hoc applicability of the examples Dione provides, and in particular Ares' near-death experience, as part of the strategy of paradigmatic consolation. But we should not downplay the theological dimensions of such an incident by subordinating them beneath the 'poetic reasons' that Andersen posits for the scene's inclusion.²⁴³ By contrast, I would stress how the examples provided by Dione—not least Ares' near-death experience—participate in a pervasive theme of the *Iliad*, namely the exploration of the nature of mortality, especially in interaction and confrontation between humanity and the gods. In an important brief discussion, Bernadete saw the import of the wounding of Aphrodite: because it restores awareness of the difference between gods and mortals, it 'makes it impossible for men any longer to compete with the gods'.²⁴⁴ Just so, it is not as a warning to Diomedes that Dione contemplates the irreversible sorrows of mortality when she envisions a grieving Aigialeia as the coda to her catalogue.

140 (οὐδ' ἄρ' ἔτι δῆν ἦν). See also Alden (2000), 130 n. 29, for Dionysos's flight to Thetis as a doublet of Aphrodite's flight to Dione. Alden (2000), 112-152, discusses this entire sequence of scenes in *Il.* 5 and 6 as a debate in 'para-narrative' over the desirability of divine assistance. See Scodel (1992), 77, for a defence of Diomedes' caution concerning fighting gods when first he faces Glaukos, as not 'out of character' in view of Athene's explicit role in the attacks on gods in *Il.* 5.

²⁴¹ See Andersen (1978), 61-70; Andersen (1981); Lang (1983), 155-156; Andersen (1997); and now Alden (2000), 21-22, 123-126, with further bibliography at 126 n. 22. For conflicts between gods and mortals in the past and present of the *Iliad*, see Kullmann (1956), 141-146; on divine precedents, esp. of conflict, see Alden (2000), 38-42.

²⁴² For the naturalisation of this story within the *Iliad*, see esp. Andersen (1997), 36. For NE parallels for the consolation of Aphrodite, esp. in the Gilgamesh epic, see Burkert (1992), 96-99; Andersen (1997); M. L. West (1997), 361-362. For a neoanalytic perspective on the binding of Ares at *Il.* 5.385-391, see Kullmann (1956), 12-13; for a NE parallel see M. L. West (1997), 362-363; cf. Kirk (1970), 195, 198, 200, on the mythic motif. For the attack on Hera by Herakles at *Il.* 5.392-394 as part of a Herakles-epic, see Kullmann (1956), 26-27. Likewise, for Diomedes as 'eine Gestalt der vorhomerischen Dichtung', including his encounters with Aphrodite and Ares, see Kullmann (1960), 85-89. An alternative line is offered by Griffin (1980), 185, on the binding of Here in *Il.* 1: 'The poet of the *Iliad* even invents archaic-sounding myths of divine conflict in the olden days'. For such 'invention', see Willcock (1964); Braswell (1971); Willcock (1977); Alden (2000), 21-22. But conversely for the potential for Homer to interact with other story-traditions, see Lang (1983), and now Dowden (1996) with further bibliography. For models of traditional interaction building on an oral poetics, see esp. Nagy ([1979] 1999), with the preface to the 1999 edition, vii-xviii; Nagy (1990b); Slatkin (1991).

²⁴³ Andersen (1981), 326-327 (his italics); this article is a response to Levy (1979), who argues for an earlier tradition of mortal gods.

²⁴⁴ Bernadete (1968), 34.

Instead, the prospect of Aigialeia's grief in the face of Diomedes' mortality is itself a further source of consolation to Aphrodite, precisely because it reasserts the hierarchical pattern of divine contemplation of mortal pain—a hierarchy momentarily overturned by Diomedes.²⁴⁵ That the normal valency of confrontations between gods and humans is reversed in the previous examples that Dione cites, as indeed it has been in Diomedes' attacks on Aphrodite and Ares, reinforces the fundamental importance of the exploration of these potential relations—and above all of control over the possibilities—for the gods themselves. In this respect, at least, this scene between Dione and Aphrodite is far from being 'on the whole, functionless', as Burkert puts it at the conclusion of his discussion of the Near Eastern heritage of the consolation scene between Aphrodite, Dione, and Zeus.²⁴⁶ Precisely what Burkert neglects is how the specifics of Dione's speech thematise confrontation between mortals and immortals in ways that are directly relevant to the confrontations between Diomedes, Aphrodite and Ares. If, in the wounds of Aphrodite and Ares, we are invited at the tip of Diomedes' spear to contemplate the simultaneous potential and insufficiency represented by anthropomorphic analogies for understanding the nature of divine presence, such reflections are extended by Dione's speech into the wider Iliadic concern with the operation and maintenance of boundaries between gods and humans.

The Olympian scene between Dione, Aphrodite and Zeus is immediately followed by Diomedes' attempt to attack Aineias, despite the protection that Aineias now has from Apollo.²⁴⁷ In repulsing Diomedes, Apollo takes the

²⁴⁵ *Il.* 5.410-415. Compare this bleak view (from a divine perspective) of the consequences of mortal relationships with what Helen says to Aphrodite at *Il.* 3.406-409: ἦσο παρ' αὐτὸν ἰοῦσα, θεῶν δ' ἀπόεικε κελεύθους, | μηδ' ἔτι σοῖσι πόδεσσιν ὑποστρέψειας Ὀλυμπον, | ἀλλ' αἰεὶ περὶ κείνον οἶζυε καὶ ἐφύλασσε, | εἰς ὃ κέ σ' ἦ' ἄλοχον ποιήσεται ἢ ὃ γε δούλην. For connections between Athene's mocking words at *Il.* 5.420-425 and the earlier scene between Aphrodite and Helen, see Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.422-425.

²⁴⁶ Burkert (1992), 99: 'What has remained in Homer is the narrative thread of a genre scene, all the more carefully preserved because it is, on the whole, functionless.' Perhaps what Burkert momentarily overlooks is a central implication of his and other discussions of the NE heritage of early Greek literature, namely that the presence of this heritage tends to be associated with cosmological concerns, for which Hesiod's *Theogony* is paradigmatic: see M. L. West (ed.) (1966), *passim*, but esp. 18-31; Burkert (1992); M. L. West (1997), 107-167, 376-305.

²⁴⁷ *Il.* 5.433: γινώσκων ὃ οἱ αὐτὸς ὑπείρεχε χεῖρας Ἀπόλλων. On this 'cognition' of the god at work, note Kullmann (1956), 142: 'Wie weit die Gestalt des Gottes dem Diomedes sichtbar ist, wird nicht gesagt'. For Diomedes' unusual disregard for Apollo here, see Fenik (1968), 45-46.

opportunity to assert the inequality between the races of immortals and of humans:²⁴⁸

" φράζεο, Τυδείδη, καὶ χάζεο, μηδὲ θεοῖσιν
ἴσ' ἔθελε φρονέειν, ἐπεὶ οὐ ποτε φύλον ὁμοῖον
ἀθανάτων τε θεῶν χαμαὶ ἐρχομένων τ' ἀνθρώπων. "

What Apollo asserts is a crisp formulation of the negative relation that persists between gods and humans, even in the midst of Diomedes' heroic exploits. This is a sharp reminder to Diomedes that, even if the presence of the gods is currently apparent to him through the assistance of Athene, there is no ground of equality between the immortal gods and humans who go about upon the ground. Of course, several points of contact between gods and humans are exactly what are explored in *Iliad* 5, but this exploration takes a form that does not produce straightforward results. If Aphrodite and Ares here take on specific 'mortal' features, especially in respect of an emergent corporeality, this is not a simple statement about divine ontology but a particular embodiment of the problematic, negative relation between gods and humans that is both facilitated and concealed by the anthropomorphic analogy.²⁴⁹ In these scenes in *Iliad* 5, the body—the corporeality of presence—is the ground over which this conceptual conflict between gods and mortals is played out, precisely because the body is so fundamental to the mortal state. But even here, as Aphrodite's arm is grazed, as Ares is struck a fatal blow that fails to kill, and as their ἵχῳ is spilt, the effect is to underline how fundamentally gods exceed mortals.

What is depicted here is the complex relationship between divine presence and divine embodiment as it emerges in the particular context of narrative. These incidents from *Iliad* 5 are not alone in exploring this relationship. A frequent problem in such contexts is that of 'disguise': some aspects of this emerged in my discussion above of Ares' and Aphrodite's 'false' and 'authentic' bodies. To talk of divine disguise entails the use of certain sorts of language that mobilise an opposition between outward and inward forms: the language of disguise implies that the exterior aspect might change while the interior form remained intact.²⁵⁰ We might compare the opening formulation of

²⁴⁸ *Il.* 5.440-442. See esp. Bernadete (1968), 34.

²⁴⁹ Compare Kullmann (1956), 146: 'Dort stand der Gott dem Menschen Auge in Auge gegenüber ..., hier haben wir Distanz des Göttlichen und Spielraum für menschliche Entscheidungs- und Wirkungsfreiheit.'

²⁵⁰ It is the rhetoric of a 'true' interiority that underlies the impact of the removal of disguise; on Odysseus's revelation in *Od.* 21-22, see esp. Murnaghan (1987), 11: 'the equation, as the hero's disguise is shed, of heroic performance with the establishment of an unchanging truth gives that performance a definitive, conclusive character that it otherwise lacks'. For more on recognition as a process, see Murnaghan (1987); Goldhill

Clay in her important article on divine transformation: 'In his masked appearance on the stage of action, the god is introduced by *εἰκώς*, *εἰσάμενος*, or some such expression'.²⁵¹ Yet despite this initial theatrical frame, during the course of the article it becomes clear that Clay is in fact discussing 'complete metamorphosis', and not masking or some other such process of disguise at all.²⁵² Likewise Vernant begins a section discussing the leaky transformations of Poseidon and Aphrodite in similar terms: 'As well-camouflaged as a god may be in the skin of a mortal'.²⁵³ In using such language, Clay and Vernant reflect something of the difficult conceptual ramifications of divine metamorphosis: how fundamental can transformation actually be? Surely something of the 'real' god must remain constant? Confronted by such complications, the temptation is to fall back on the familiar terms of the mortal bodily code, and the persistence of identity is conceived in corporeal terms—as the corporeal presence, such as it is imagined to be, that underlies the outward semblance of the god. Arguably, use of the language of disguise in such contexts engenders a false confidence in the *prima facie* comprehensibility of transformation. This is the crux, in particular, of the appearance of gods in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in the form of birds, which has become a scholarly limit case in the use of 'disguise' as a framing concept in discussions of divine transformation.²⁵⁴ This false confidence also underlies why the 'disguise' of Demeter in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* has taken on a canonical status in the explication of divine transformation.²⁵⁵ I will discuss divine bird-appearances in Homer in more detail below, but first I want to turn to two instances of gods in mortal guise in the *Iliad* that seem to show unstable disguises and thus to offer insights into the 'corporeality' that we might imagine to underlie the outward semblance of gods in disguise.

The first of these moments comes with Aphrodite's appearance to Helen in the guise of an old serving-woman:²⁵⁶

γρῆ δέ μιν εἰκῦα παλαιγενεῖ προσέειπεν
 εἰροκόμῳ, ἣ οἱ Λακεδαῖμονι ναιεταώσει
 ἥσκειν εὔρια καλά, μάλιστα δέ μιν φιλέεσκεν.

(1991), 5-24; Henderson (1997); and esp. Pucci (1987), 76-97, on how disguise destabilises the 'natural' or 'authentic' in the case of Odysseus also.

²⁵¹ Clay (1974), 129.

²⁵² Clay (1974), 136.

²⁵³ Vernant ([1986] 1991a), 43.

²⁵⁴ See below, pp. 136-137.

²⁵⁵ See e.g. D. T. Steiner (2001), 96-97; Karanika (2001), 279.

²⁵⁶ *Il.* 3.386-388. Pucci mentions this exchange between Helen and Aphrodite in *Iliad* 3 only briefly, as a 'partial vision': Pucci ([1988] 1998b), 83 n. 7.

But this strategy is short-lived, and, when Aphrodite stirs her desires, a moment of clear perception comes upon Helen:²⁵⁷

395 ὥς φάτο· τῇ δ' ἄρα θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι δρινεν·
καί ῥ' ὥς οὖν ἐνόησε θεᾶς περικαλλέα δειρήν
στήθεά θ' ἱμερόεντα καὶ ὄμματα μαρμαίροντα,
θάμβησέν τ' ἄρ' ἔπειτα ἔπος τ' ἔφατ' ἔκ τ' ὀνόμαζεν·

Emotions frame the moment of perception: the stirring of Helen's θυμός is supplanted by wonder,θάμβος, as Helen 'realises' the presence of the goddess; the emotion-laden character of such perception is apparent.²⁵⁸ A key issue here is how Helen perceives Aphrodite—I almost write: 'how Helen sees Aphrodite showing through beneath the disguise', but this is to assume more than the text states. To be sure, Aphrodite's περικαλλέα δειρήν, στήθεα ἱμερόεντα and ὄμματα μαρμαίροντα are fitting attributes to betray the presence of this particular divine body.²⁵⁹ Clay comments: 'The love goddess, it appears, cannot be other than lovely and desirable'.²⁶⁰ But a multiplicity of questions present themselves.²⁶¹ How is it that these features become visible to Helen when divine disguise is notable precisely for its efficacy? Are we supposed to recognise something about the efficacy of Helen's powers of perception? Or, conversely, something about the potential for overflow in divine corporeality, a leak of divinity that belies Aphrodite's guise? Athetesis of this section was one solution proposed in antiquity to avoid such complexities.²⁶² For the Homeric focus on Helen's perceptual abilities—a forerunner of Stesichorus's and Euripides' deceptively double Helens—compare her recognition of the disguised Odysseus in Troy, as

²⁵⁷ Il. 3.395-398.

²⁵⁸ On θαμβεῖν, see esp. Prier (1989), 87-89.

²⁵⁹ With Aphrodite's στήθεα ἱμερόεντα, compare *HomHymAphr* 73: ἐν στήθεσσι βάλ' ἱμερον; also what Anchises beholds at *HomHymAphr* 88-90: ὄρμιοι δ' ἀμφ' ἀπαλῇ δειρήνι περικαλλέες ἦσαν | καλοὶ χρύσειοι παμποίκιλοι· ὥς δὲ σελήνη | στήθεσιν ἀμφ' ἀπαλοῖσιν ἐλάμπετο, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι. The focus on what is worn on the body in these lines is carefully framed for what it suggests about the body itself; see Allen and Sikes (edd.) (1904), on *HomHymAphr* 90, on the problematic subject of ἐλάμπετο. The absence of Aphrodite's eyes here suits her maidenly guise; the eyes here are all Anchises': *HomHymAphr* 83-84.

²⁶⁰ Clay (1989), 175.

²⁶¹ Compare Kirk (ed.) (1985), on 3.396-398: '[H]as the goddess abandoned her disguise? Or do these features resist transformation? Or does Helen see through the outward disguise?'

²⁶² For Aristarkhos's athetesis, see Kirk (ed.) (1985), on 3.396-398. On such athetesis, cf. Martin (2000), 55, discussing *Od.* 3.199-200: 'Athetizing ... as Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus did, avoids some awkwardness, but at the cost of eliminating the irony that may have been central to traditional conventions for representing Nestor in epic.'

told by Helen herself to Menelaus and Telemachos in *Odyssey* 4.²⁶³ There, she alone recognised Odysseus 'such as he was': ἐγὼ δέ μιν οἷη ἀνέγνων τοῖον ἐόντα.²⁶⁴ Stephanie West declares that '[i]t makes little difference' just what τοῖον ἐόντα implies here: "'as the man he was'" or "though thus disguised".²⁶⁵ But such ambiguity is important in relation to πολύτροπος Odysseus, and already the point has been made by Helen here that the figure of Odysseus's disguise is something of an anomaly.²⁶⁶

ἄλλωι δ' αὐτὸν φωτὶ κατακρύπτων ἦϊσκε
δέκτῃ, ὅς οὐδὲν τοῖος ἔην ἐπὶ νηυσὶν Ἀχαιῶν.

Odysseus, the ἄνδρα πολύτροπον of the *Odyssey*, and in many respects the 'other man' of the *Iliad* contrasted with Agamemnon and Akhilleus, here likens himself to an 'other man'—a beggar, or 'Dektes'?²⁶⁷ The difficulties of exegesis do not end with the noun, and the appended relative clause further complicates matters. Is the ὅς Odysseus or the beggar/Dektes? And what does οὐδὲν τοῖος ἔην then signify? Alternatives: 'who was not at all like this among the Greek ships'; 'a person who was not there at all among the Greek ships'; even, 'a type of person such as was not at all among the Greek ships'.²⁶⁸ The τοῖος of this clause is picked up by the ambiguous τοῖον of the disguised Odysseus whom Helen recognises a few lines later. Are we then to conclude that there is something anomalous about Odysseus's disguise itself? Perhaps it is somehow *too* total, a disguise that takes Odysseus either too far from himself or too close

²⁶³ *Od.* 4.242-264. Helen's story is swiftly undermined by Menelaus's counter-narrative (was she motivated by a δαίμων? *Od.* 4.274-275) of her deceptive strategem when the Greeks are inside the Wooden Horse at *Od.* 4.271-289. See Schmiel (1972); Bergren (1981); Goldhill (1988), 19-24; Boyd (1998); Worman (2001), 30-34. For the relation of the *Odyssey* with cyclic epic at this point, see Severyns (1928 [1967]), 334-336, 347-349. See also Andersen (1977), 8-9, declaring the 'utterly Odyssean' character of this narrative of 'hide and seek'; for the 'low' status of disguise, and for this as an Odyssean retrojection into the Iliadic story, see Goldhill (1991), 101-102; Bassi (1995), 13-14; Doherty (1995), 171.

²⁶⁴ *Od.* 4.250.

²⁶⁵ S. West (ed.) (1988), on 4.250.

²⁶⁶ *Od.* 4.247-248. For the epithet, πολύτροπος, see *Od.* 1.1; 10.330, ἧ σύ γ' Ὀδυσσεύς ἐσσι πολύτροπος; Pucci (1987), 24-25; Goldhill (1991), 3 and n. 3.

²⁶⁷ For Odysseus as an anomaly in the *Iliad*, see now Pache (2000). On the reading δέκτῃ or Δέκτῃ, see S. West (ed.) (1988), on 4.246-249. The word would be hapax as 'beggar' (Aristarkhos), but who is this Dektes? Sch. HMQT on *Od.* 4.248 comments: ὁ κυκλικὸς τὸ δέκτῃ ὀνοματικῶς ἀκούει (see also Allen (ed.) (1912), *Ilias Parva*, fr. 11); and then declares that this Dektes is the person from whom Odysseus takes the rags in question.

²⁶⁸ For various alternatives, see S. West (ed.) (1988), on 4.246-249. See esp. sch. E on *Od.* 4.248: ἡ γὰρ τοιοῦτον πτωχὸν κατέστησεν ἑαυτὸν, οἷος οὐ μὴ εὑρεθῇ ἄλλος εἰς τὸ ὄλον Ἑλληνικόν· ἡ τοιοῦτος ἐγένετο, οἷον τις ὁρῶν εἶπεν ἂν μὴ εἶναι Ὀδυσσεά; cf. Eustathius 1494.55ff., 163.33-36 Stallbaum, on *Od.* 4.248.

to the out-of-place figure of the beggar/Dektes?²⁶⁹ The result is that Helen, singularly perceptive as she is (ἐγὼ δέ μιν οἷη ἀνέγνων), recognises this anomalous figure precisely as Odyssean in its flux between 'the man he really was' and 'the man as he was disguised'.

A similar flux between an identifiable form and a disguised form is what Helen perceives in this scene in *Iliad* 3. As I suggested above, the text does not so much explain the mechanism of Helen's perception as present Aphrodite's presence in its perceptual 'felt-ness' to Helen. The use of the verb νοέω here privileges perception over sight, as it marks a momentary shift of initiative and signals an act of 'realisation' instead of 'seeing'; the correlation of ἐνόησε and θάμβησεν underlines the felt character of perception at this point.²⁷⁰ In this focus on perceptive emotion, the text does not allow us to see Aphrodite 'showing through beneath the disguise' as such. But what the text does do is to juxtapose the double presence of the old serving-woman and the beautiful neck, desirable breasts and mesmerising eyes of the goddess. The attributes of Aphrodite that provoke Helen's astonishment are signs of presence that are somehow incorporated into Aphrodite's guise as an old woman. It is as if these features of desire present themselves amidst the old woman's guise, a prospect which undoubtedly offers a surreal and oxymoronic combination in the Greek cultural context; the juxtaposition might itself express the power of Aphrodite, as it manifests in this vision of a strangely desirable old woman.²⁷¹ These signs of Aphrodite are in themselves sufficient for recognition when placed amid her guise as an old serving-woman. The figured presence of the goddess is functionally complete in this moment of startling juxtaposition.

For all the numerous instances of divine (dis)guise that seem relatively unproblematic, it is characteristic that in moments such as this the Homeric

²⁶⁹ Compare Boyd (1998), 3: 'The hero who is a mainstay of the Achaean army has become "Nobody" for the first time—and yet Helen recognises him at once'; and Worman (2001), 32: Odysseus 'is so unlike himself ... that he slips into Troy ... unnoticed, except by Helen herself'.

²⁷⁰ For νοέω as marking a change in the initiative, see Nagy ([1979] 1999), 51, §13n. For the correlation of emotion with perception in the use of νοέω, see von Fritz (1943); on cognition, cf. Leshner (1981), (1994). A similar stress on this 'feltness' of perception occurs at *Od.* 1.320-323, where Athene departs like a bird, and gives Telemakhos μένος καὶ θάρσος in his θυμός; recognition ensues, with a correlation of the activity of φρενές and θυμός in lines 322-323: ὁ δὲ φρεσὶν ἦισι νοήσας | θάμβησεν κατὰ θυμόν· οἶσατο γὰρ θεὸν εἶναι.

²⁷¹ Worman (1997), 163, stresses how Helen's body remains cloaked from the audience's eyes during this scene, whereas the audience 'see' Aphrodite through Helen's eyes; while this contrast holds, the visibility of Aphrodite in fact remains limited to her guise as an old woman and these three signs of desirability.

poems offer their audiences dramatisations of uncertainty in the play of divine appearance. Pucci has contributed signally to the understanding of the indeterminacies and destabilising effects of the Odyssean disguises of Odysseus, in terms which point up the difficulties of recovering 'his' stable identity in Ithake, and Pucci's analysis goes on to discuss the appearances of Athene in *Odyssey* 13 as evidencing 'The Unreadable Figure of Metis'.²⁷² A key point in his discussion is the suggestion that 'the phenomenology of the gods—their epiphanic forms—eludes all ontology'.²⁷³ It is in relation to this claim—compare my discussion above of anthropomorphic analogies and the bodily presence of the gods—that I am focusing upon these examples in which moments of faulty disguise might at first seem to offer clearer perspectives on the persistence of corporeal identity, but, when more closely read, offer instead traces of presence whose modalities point again towards the figurative status of divine corporeality. The metamorphosis of Aphrodite to this extent is not a 'disguise', but a (partial) opening up of the goddess's presence in the world for specific ends.

Poseidon's appearance in the guise of Kalkhas to the two Aiantes in *Iliad* 13 is another intriguing example.²⁷⁴ The scene ends with the god darting away 'like a hawk'; at this point, Aias son of Oileus recognises a god at work, and he observes to Aias son of Telamon:²⁷⁵

Αἴαν, ἐπεὶ τις νῶϊ θεῶν οἱ Ὀλυμπον ἔχουσι
 μάντι εἰδόμενος κέλεται παρὰ νηυσὶ μάχεσθαι—
 οὐδ' ὃ γε Κάλχας ἐστί, θεοπρόπος οἰωνιστής·
 ἴχνια²⁷⁶ γὰρ μετόπισθε ποδῶν ἦδὲ κνημῶν
 ῥεῖ' ἔγνων ἀπιόντος· ἀρίγνωτοι δὲ θεοὶ περ·

What betrays to Aias the presence of the god in the semblance of Kalchas are the ἴχνια ποδῶν ἦδὲ κνημῶν of the god as he departs. Again the verb is not one of seeing so much as of perception, ἔγνων, and the use of the aorist suits Aias's rhetoric at this point: ῥεῖ ... ἀρίγνωτοι δὲ θεοὶ περ. But what are these ἴχνια, and what would it be to recognise them? Janko wonders about the relevance of 'shins', if we are to understand ἴχνια as footprints.²⁷⁷ The status of these traces

²⁷² Odysseus: Pucci (1987), esp. 94; note the unexpected colour of Odysseus's beard or hair at *Od.* 16.176, and see Hoekstra (ed.) (1989), on 16.176. Athene: Pucci (1987), 102-123.

²⁷³ Pucci (1987), 107. For this point, see also W. Smith (1988).

²⁷⁴ *Il.* 13.43-65.

²⁷⁵ *Il.* 13.68-72. Hawk-simile: 13.62-65.

²⁷⁶ West (ed) (1998-2000) prints ἴχματα.

²⁷⁷ See Janko (ed.) (1992), on 13.70-72: 'Gods are often recognized only as they depart ... but Aias' recognition of a god from the ἴχνια of his "feet and shins" is odd. If he is known from his "footprints" why mention his shins?'. At *Od.* 2.406, 3.30, 5.193, and 7.38, either

of the god's presence is further complicated by the juxtaposition of these ἵχνια hard upon the heels of the hawk-simile that accompanies Poseidon's departure: ὥς τ' ἱρήξ ὠκύπτερος ὤρτο πέτεσθαι.²⁷⁸ This instance becomes further grist to the mill of those who discuss the avian likenesses of the gods in Homer, to judge one way or the other about the form of the god at this point.²⁷⁹ More productive is the comment of Vernant on this collocation of images as reflecting the 'disorienting, paradoxical, and prodigious character of a body that is "other"'.²⁸⁰ But it is perhaps more significant again that the juxtaposition of images here is mediated by point of view: what is presented to the audience by the narrator as the departure of Poseidon 'like a hawk' is restated by Aias son of Oileus in terms of an easy recognition of the traces of the god's feet and shins. This shift underpins an important point: the presence of Poseidon's ἵχνια as such is dependent upon the perception of Aias, and thus it is in the shift from Poseidon 'like a hawk' to the traces of his feet and shins that Aias sees that the problem for the audience of the epic lies. Are we in fact all seeing the same thing?

Perhaps this is not a question that can receive a satisfactory answer on its own terms, but it raises a question of point of view that has pertinent ramifications when considered in relation to another notable element of this scene. For curiously, despite Vernant's insistence upon its 'disorienting, paradoxical, and prodigious character', there is nothing here of the physical-emotional reaction of θάμβος that is frequently felt by mortals at such disorienting points. Aias son of Oileus and Aias son of Telamon do not react as Helen does to Aphrodite, where her act of perception is correlate with a physical-emotional state of wonder, θάμβος. This point is well made by Pucci,

Telemakhos or Odysseus follows in the tracks of a goddess: ὁ δ' ἔπειτα μετ' ἵχνια βαίνει θεοῖο; the phrase is only used in these instances, and must signify the special degree of favour in each case.

²⁷⁸ *Il.* 13.62.

²⁷⁹ Janko (ed.) (1992), on 13.70-72, discounts the suggestion of Pollard (1977), 158, that these might be bird tracks, reflecting an avian transformation; the idea is also pursued by Dietrich (1983), 58: 'Whether or not the god actually transformed himself into that bird, the image is bound to confuse the hearer ...'. But Janko (ed.) (1992), on 13.62-65, is confident that Poseidon has the speed of the hawk, not its shape; cf. his comment on 13.70-72: 'in the swirl of battle his speed, which the poet indicates at 65 and 90, would be far more obvious [than bird-tracks]'.

²⁸⁰ Vernant ([1986] 1991a), 43, draws particular attention to the extremes of weight and lightness in the presence of gods: here Poseidon departs 'like a hawk'; at *Il.* 5. 837-839, Athene's great weight has marked effect on Diomedes' chariot; cf. Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 5.838-839.

when he contrasts this Poseidon-scene with Athene's similarly odd departure from Nestor's Pylian banquet in *Odyssey* 3:²⁸¹

Nothing of the theatrical event in Pylos occurs here: no amazement (*thambos*, *thauma*); no collective recognition of the god (the other Ajax recognises after the first Ajax's recognition); no visible miracle, but a trace of the god's past presence; no recognition of the individual god.

What then is the dynamic of this scene? Certainly, the encounter has an effective outcome, in that the two Aiantes are at its conclusion *χάρμηι γηθόσσυνοι*, even as Poseidon is rousing the other Greeks who have found respite by the ships.²⁸² But is it as straightforward as this? A basic strategy here must be to follow up the suggestion of irony in the 'ease' of Aias's recognition of Poseidon here: as Janko points out, Menelaus tells in *Odyssey* 4 how Aias fails to recognise the agency of Poseidon in his survival of shipwreck, and the god kills him for his boast.²⁸³ Accordingly, the ease of Aias's recognition here possesses an ironic aspect, and the fact that Aias does not recognise Poseidon as such in these *ἔχνια ποδῶν ἥδ' ἐκ νημάτων* itself gains an added significance. Aias's perception at this point is thus pointedly partial. But more than this, the problem of point of view is in a sense turned on its head: as it turns out, the audience are in fact in a position to recognise more than Aias, namely the presence of Poseidon as such, the hawkish departure of the god and the ironies of Aias's confident boast. Despite our initial impression that in seeing the *ἔχνια* of the god Aias had the decisive privilege of autopsy, Aias's perception of these traces of the god is itself implicitly problematic, and not simply through the narrator's juxtaposition of these traces alongside the image of the hawk, but also by the ironies of Aias's own later lack of perspicuity.

The situation is thus the converse of Helen's recognition of Aphrodite. There the scene draws, in its play with Aphrodite's appearance as a disconcerting object of desire, upon Helen's wider significance in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* both as an object of perception herself and as someone whose own specially perceptive abilities are repeatedly explored. Helen's paradigmatic status as both the subject and object of desire is one to which Greek writers

²⁸¹ Pucci (1987), 121-122; cf. 115-122. On this scene, see below, pp. 138-146.

²⁸² *Il.* 13.82-84.

²⁸³ *Od.* 4.499-511, esp. 504-505: *φῆ δ' ἀέκητι θεῶν φυγέειν μέγα λαῖτμα θαλάσσης. ἰ τοῦ δ' ἐκ Ποσειδάων μεγάλ' ἔκλυεν αὐδήσαντος*; see Janko (ed.) (1992), on *Il.* 13.72. See esp. Todorov ([1971] 1977), 56, on Aias and 'the risk of speech'. Compare the comic depiction of Aias at *Il.* 23.780-784: see above, pp. 87-88; and see below, p. 123 and n. 300, on the Homeric antecedent of the visible disfavour of Athene at Aias upon the rape of Cassandra in later poetic versions. For the story of Aias, see esp. Graf ([1978] 2000); in vase painting, Connelly (1993).

return again and again as a touchstone for thinking about the possibilities of perception and presence, but it is a status whose ramifications have already begun to develop in *Iliad* 3.²⁸⁴ Here, by contrast, Aias's boastful status as a (partial, belated) misrecogniser of the purpose and presence of the gods at work underpins the shift in point of view that results in the confusing collocation of Kalkhas, the hawk and the ἔχνη ποδῶν ἥδ' ἐκ κνημιάων. But in both cases, what is explored is not so much a leaky corporeality on the part of these two gods as the problems of sight, presence and perception which Helen and Aias personify in their respective roles within the larger narrative of the Trojan war. The figurations of divine presence are thus the arena in which the audience of the epic are invited to explore the implications of Helen's and Aias's respective perceptual capacities. Accordingly, what these scenes offer us are not moments of privileged access to an authentic corporeal presence of the gods, but two further instances of the problematic relations between divine presence, corporeality, and (dis)guise, instances which themselves recapitulate important aspects of the referential narrative economy of the *Iliad*.

In these instances, then, the leakage of signs of Aphrodite's and Poseidon's divinity turns out not to give us access to an authentic divine ontology beneath a 'masking' disguise, but instead to point again to the figuration of divine corporeality and anthropomorphism. The theatrical metaphor frequently adopted in such contexts is not an accurate approximation of the dynamics of divine appearance and disguise because the divine 'anti-body' always has the potential to offer both less and more than is possible in a simple masking of the human body.²⁸⁵ The figure of Odysseus in the *Odyssey* shows us a divinely assisted extension of what is normally possible within the confines of a human corporeal code, but in this respect Odysseus constitutes a significant anomaly, a radically polytropic man—with disquieting consequences, Pucci has argued, for the stability of Odysseus's own narrative of identity.²⁸⁶ The gods, by contrast, are free of such consequences, and their capacity for mutability reflects something more profound than a metamorphic body—the gods transcend the very terms within which such a body might be humanly

²⁸⁴ See N. Austin (1994); but esp. Worman (1997), 155: '[a]s both subject and object in this viewing process, Helen's body comes to be used as a structuring element'. On Helen's verbal contributions in *Il.* 3, see Worman (2001).

²⁸⁵ Note Ingold (2000), 94: 'The greater the person's powers of metamorphosis, the wider the range of their practical possibilities of being, and hence the more extensive the breadth of their experience and the scope of their phenomenal presence.' Ingold builds on the acute discussion of Viveiros de Castro ([1998] 2002), 319-320.

²⁸⁶ See above, p. 116.

understood. Thus, even in these moments of leakage, the 'body of the gods' operates in a fashion more figurative than denominational. What I mean by this is that the body of the gods gains significance in such moments precisely in relational terms—by a relating of divine bodies to those of mortals in terms that negate and exceed mortal corporeality. In this respect, the bodies of the gods emerge as objects of human perceptions within specific relational frames, but they are not limited by these particular configurations. What has shaped up initially to offer a special perspective on the modalities of divine presence, and especially the body of the gods, actually turns out to offer another disconcerting formulation of divine presence in terms of a relation with the human corporeal code that negates the basis of comparison. This disruptive capacity is a key feature of the problematic of divine presence. While such a sequence underlines the importance of figuration as a relational means to express the modalities of divine presence, nevertheless this figuration embraces its own incompleteness. As such, it offers a way of framing what cannot be expressed in simple denominational terms. This is the particular realm of divine presence, namely 'a world in front of the text'.²⁸⁷

Coda: present images and images of presence

In discussing interaction between gods and mortals in the Homeric poems, I have laid stress upon the elusive potential of divine presence. The body of the gods is unlike that of mortals, and conceptions and perceptions of how the presence of a god is framed are permeated by this unlikeness. The example of the long arm of Zeus shows in particular the flux of power and of presence. This flux is not well described by typologising definitions of divine epiphany in terms of a self-evident presence, especially as expressed in the adaptation of type-scenes of mortal travel and arrival. The examples of Aphrodite and Ares, and of Aphrodite and Poseidon, likewise point towards the figurative status of anthropomorphism in contexts of divine presence. These configurations of

²⁸⁷ See White (1991), 313: '[t]he tension between these two elements projects a "world" "in front of" the text, a world which is the metaphorical reference'; White is discussing Ricoeur ([1975] 1978) and the formulation of sameness and difference—'is like' and 'is not'—as a tension between the metaphorical referent and the literal referent (itself 'impossible'). See esp. Ricoeur ([1975] 1978), 247-256.

presence are framed in relation to their context, not by any exigencies—could there be such?—of divine ontology, and in this respect they present narrative challenges to the audiences of these epics. Nonetheless, it is still possible for such configurations to attain a certain stylisation.²⁸⁸ This is particularly important in contexts of ritualised activity, which often express their effectiveness in repetition and other kinds of rhetorical regularity in the performance of relations between mortals and gods.²⁸⁹ But however important ritual is in offering strategies of control over relations between mortals and gods it does not in fact close down the multifarious potentiality of divine power and presence. The process of interpretative relating—above all, of narrating the event—remains fundamental, if always incomplete, in situations of encounter between mortals and gods. In this coda, I want to consider this relation of ritual and divine embodiment in relation to two notable Homeric images of divine presence, before passing on to larger questions about ritualisation in the next section of this chapter.

Something of this potential for stylisation in the embodied form of the gods may be seen in the case of the famous nod of Zeus in *Iliad* 1, where the ritualised claim of suppliance that Thetis lays upon Zeus is positively acknowledged in a famous image:²⁹⁰

ἦ, καὶ κυανέησιν ἐπ' ὀφρύσι νεῦσε Κρονίων,
 ἀμβρόσιαι δ' ἄρα χαῖται ἐπερρώσαντο ἄνακτος
 530 κρατὸς ἀπ' ἀθανάτοιο· μέγαν δ' ἐλέλιξεν Ὀλυμπον.

In these lines Zeus's decision is presented in powerfully evocative terms that highlight the significance of this moment for the plot of the *Iliad*. Zeus's will is figured at this point in an embodied form that picks up and amplifies the physicality of Thetis's supplication, and it does so in terms that renders Zeus's embodiment here a consummate expression of divine power.²⁹¹ Not for

²⁸⁸ Compare Pucci (1987), 244, on the figure of Athene at *Od.* 13.288-289: this image 'maintains or supports the illusion or the domesticated belief in a specific, visible, describable *image* of the goddess'; thus 'the imaginary is made visible, and the temples and theater will be quick to use the device of an *eidolon* of the god appearing in the sacred precinct or theater'.

²⁸⁹ For stereotypy as a feature of ritualised activity, see Rappaport (1979); Tambiah (1981), 119; Rappaport (1999), 24-25, 28-31, 33, 36.

²⁹⁰ *Il.* 1.528-530.

²⁹¹ For the physicality of Thetis's supplication, see *Il.* 1.500-501: καὶ λάβε γούνων ἰσκαίῃ, δεξιτερῇ δ' ἄρ' ὑπ' ἀνθερεῶνος ἐλοῦσα; 512-513: ὥς ἤψατο γούνων, ἰ ὥς ἔχετ' ἐμπεφυῖα; on the language here, see Kirk (ed.) (1985), on *Il.* 1.512-513. In response to Thetis, Zeus sits long in silence, 1.511-512, τὴν δ' οὐ τι προσέφη νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς, ἰ ἀλλ' ἀκέων δὴν ᾗστο, which is the cue for a reiteration of Thetis's touch and her second plea 1.512-516. For this silence as Zeus reviewing the rest of the plot of the *Iliad*, see Bernadete (1968), 25; as a sign of resistance, see Lynn-George (1988), 40. On supplication

nothing do the terms ἀμβρόσιαι and ἀθανάτοιο frame the central image of Zeus's flowing locks, and these super-human aspects of the god themselves flow through into the shaking of Olympos.²⁹² Important here is how Thetis's supplication of Zeus reconfigures the physical contact between Thetis and Akhilleus on a new level.²⁹³ Viewed as a part of this sequence, Zeus's act of will comes as a climactic moment of emotive physicality that in its embodied power decisively transcends mortal corporeal limits. Supposedly these lines will later be taken by Pheidias as the model for his statue of Zeus at Olympia.²⁹⁴ Whatever the status of this anecdote, it suggests how iconographic traditions play with the potential of language and sculpture to offer significant tokens of the substantial physical presence of a god.²⁹⁵ This is the embodiment of the gods in a starker form than poetry, perhaps, but the physical forms that result still offer themselves ambiguously as 'created' objects of human skill, as figurations of the gods, and as embodiments of the gods that are in themselves significant presences.²⁹⁶ This process is well illustrated by this 'Pheidian' move to encompass the embodied and subjective act of will of the Homeric Zeus of *Iliad* 1 within the dual frames of temple and statue.

in the *Iliad*, see esp. Lynn-George (1988), 200-209; note 200: 'At every significant stage across the epic narrative ... the voice of the suppliant returns'; at 201, 287 n. 27, Lynn-George argues against the over-emphasis on supplication 'as a ritual rigorously determined by physical contact', as it is taken in Gould (1973): speech is fundamental to Iliadic supplication.

²⁹² Compare Hera's shaking of Olympos at *Il.* 8.199.

²⁹³ Thetis embraces Akhilleus, mother and son, at *Il.* 1.361: χειρί τέ μιν κατέρεξε (for this phrase, see esp. Martin (1989), 18-20, and above, pp. 79-80); then Akhilleus demands this contact be passed on in formal supplication at 1.394 and 407: ἐλθοῦς Ὀλύμπιονδε Δία λίσαι ... παρέξεο καὶ λαβὲ γούνων. Thetis's role as conveyor of Akhilleus's demands is then reiterated at 1.495-496: θέτις δ' οὐ λήθετ' ἐφετμέων ἰ παιδὸς ἐοῦ; shortly afterwards, Thetis supplicates Zeus, 1.500-502: καὶ ῥα παροιθ' αὐτοῖο καθέζετο, καὶ λάβε γούνων ... λισσομένη.

²⁹⁴ The anecdote is told by Strabo 8.3.30: ἀπομνημονεύουσι δὲ τοῦ Φειδίου, δῖοτι πρὸς τὸν Πάναινον εἶπε ... ὅτι πρὸς τὴν Ὀμήρου [sc. εἰκόνην] δι' ἐπῶν ἐκτεθείσαν; Strabo shortly afterwards adds a 'nice' saying about Homer and the likenesses of the gods: κομψῶς δ' εἴρηται καὶ τὸ ὅ τὰς τῶν θεῶν εἰκόνας ἢ μόνος ἰδὼν ἢ μόνος δείξας. For ancient reactions to the statue of Zeus at Olympia, see Overbeck ([1868] 1959), nos. 692-754.

²⁹⁵ It is precisely this potential that Kallimakhos exploits for comic effect in *Iambus* 6 on the Pheidian statue of Zeus at Olympia. See Kerkhecker (1999), 150: 'The playful identification of the god and statue lies at the heart of *Iambus* VI. The statue is "the god himself" (37f.)'. On the broader question, see Gordon (1979); Gladigow (1986); Schnapp (1988); Gladigow (1990); Vernant (1991d); now D. T. Steiner (2001), esp. 79-134.

²⁹⁶ For such significant presence, compare the substantial effect created by the size of the statue that is noted by Strabo 8.3.30: ἀπτόμενον δὲ σχεδόν τι τῇ κορυφῇ τῆς ὀροφῆς, ὥστ' ἔμφασιν ποιεῖν, ἐὰν ὀρθὸς γένηται διαναστάς, ἀποστεγάσειν τὸν νεῶν; see Pausanias 5.11.9 for the god bearing witness to the τέχνη of Pheidias. For the "enlivening dynamization" of literary descriptions of this statue, see Kerkhecker (1999), 164-165, citing *Il.* 1.528-530 as 'the best "description" in this sense, creating a living image of the living god'. See also D. T. Steiner (2001), 99-100.

Yet it must be pointed out that already the *Iliad* plays with such possibilities, and foreshadows this stylisation of the presence of the god that Pheidias will offer in his sculptural (re)enactment of Zeus's nod. But, significantly, it does so in a way that reinforces above all the contingency of divine presence and its perception. In a noted scene in *Iliad* 6, the Homeric text presents us with the ambiguous status of a statue as both an objective and subjective embodiment of presence. Moreover, this ambiguity plays out in a situation where questions of presence and epiphany are being reformulated in the context of ritualised action, namely the plea for divine assistance—for Athene, ἑρυσίπτολι, to defend Troy—when Hekabe leads a procession of Trojan women to the acropolis temple of Athene to pray for protection for Troy from the spear of Diomedes.²⁹⁷ The critical moment comes when Theano, the priestess of Athene, makes the offering and prays before the goddess:²⁹⁸

ἦ δ' ἄρα πέπλον ἐλοῦσα Θεανῶ καλλιπάρῃος
 θῆκεν Ἀθηναίης ἐπὶ γούνασιν ἡῦκόμοιο,
 εὐχομένη δ' ἡρᾶτο Διὸς κούρηι μέγαλοιο·
 305 " πότνι' Ἀθηναίη ἑρυσίπτολι, δῖα θεάων,
 ἄξον δὴ ἔγχος Διομήδεος, ἡδὲ καὶ αὐτόν
 πρηγέα δὸς πεσέειν Σκαιῶν προπάροιθε πυλάων,
 ὄφρα τοι αὐτίκα νῦν δυοκαίδεκα βοῦς ἐνὶ νηῶι
 ἦνις ἡκέστας ἱερεύσομεν, αἳ κ' ἐλεήσῃς
 310 ἄστυ τε καὶ Τρώων ἀλόχους καὶ νήπια τέκνα. "
 ὥς ἔφατ' εὐχομένη· ἀνένευε δὲ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη.

The offering is laid on the lap of Athene, the prayer is made, and the goddess indicates refusal.²⁹⁹ Is this an epiphanic presence? On a linguistic level there is no distinction between the goddess and the cult image: Ἀθηναίης ἐπὶ γούνασιν ἡῦκόμοιο ... πότνι' Ἀθηναίη ... ἀνένευε δὲ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη.³⁰⁰ Likewise the verb in

²⁹⁷ *Il.* 6.286-312. For the important observation that Theano does not narrate the relation between Athene and Troy except in the future, see Lang (1975), 310. For others critical of the 'bribe', see e.g. Morrison (1991); Lateiner (1997), 262. For more on Homeric prayer, see below, p. 107 nn. 405, 407. On the divine patronage and protection of Troy, see Scully (1990).

²⁹⁸ *Il.* 6.302-311. For the suggestion that ἡρᾶτο denotes 'un sens d'appel à une présence "actuelle"', see Aubriot (1992), 305-307, 319; but also Pulleyn (1997), 75-76.

²⁹⁹ For nodding-up refusal, see Lateiner (1995), 78, and *Il.* 16.250, 252, 22.205; *Od.* 9.468, 21.129. Note Scully (1990), 39-40: 'In contrast to the extended descriptions of supplication and sacrifice as the Trojans try in vain to invoke their goddess ... her denial comprises one half of one hexameter and is unflinching'.

³⁰⁰ The reaction by the goddess/statue of Athene in Troy is specifically reworked by later poets in the context of the rape of Cassandra by Aias son of Oileus. See Kallimakhos, fr. 35, Pfeiffer (ed.) (1949-1953) [= sch. AD on *Il.* 13.66; not in Erbse]: τὴν θεὸν τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τοῦ ξοάνου εἰς τὴν ὁροφὴν τρέψαι. Compare ps.-Lycophron, *Alexandra* 361-364, where the language does not distinguish between the goddess and the

line 311 suggests a physical gesture on the part of the goddess/statue.³⁰¹ This prompted objections from ancient commentators: γελοία δὲ καὶ ἡ ἀνανεύουσα Ἀθηνᾶ.³⁰² However we read this gesture, what is certainly the case is that the audience are able to perceive here what the ritual participants themselves seemingly do not, namely the convergence in this act of refusal of the decision-making presence of the goddess and her physical representation.³⁰³ Athene's act of will is encompassed in the embodied form of her statue, and at this moment the goddess becomes apparent. The passage presents a convergence between the physicality of the goddess as represented in the temple and the physicality of her refusal to hear this prayer, but this is a convergence that the actual participants in the ritualised offering fail to perceive. The significance of this failure must not be underestimated. Morrison, for example, discusses Homeric prayer scenes as a form of narrative foreshadowing, and is concerned that from this scene 'the audience learns nothing'.³⁰⁴ But the scene itself must recall for audiences of the epic the absent figure of the Palladion.³⁰⁵ While the *Iliad* tends to exclude cyclic epic motifs of a magical or uncanny nature, here it reintroduces the motif of the Palladion in another, subtler guise; thus, in place of a magical talisman, the basic importance of Athene and Athene's statue for the protection of Troy is here realised in the convergence of refusal and presence that this scene presents and which the Trojans fail to perceive.³⁰⁶ The absence of

Palladion; and Quintus of Smyrna 13.425-427, where the goddess and the image are not distinguished until the end of 13.427, when θεῖον ἄγαλμα raises the question.

³⁰¹ Against Morrison (1991), 310 n. 28.

³⁰² Sch. A on *Il.* 6.311, going back to Aristarkhos, who athetised the line; see Kirk (ed.) (1990), on *Il.* 6.311-12; also Morrison (1991), 310 n. 28.

³⁰³ Athene's status as an 'activated agent' is clearly visible in Attic black-figure vase paintings of this story; in red-figure painting the status as 'statue' receives more stress: see Connelly (1993), esp. 90, 101; D. T. Steiner (2001), 158-160.

³⁰⁴ Morrison (1991), 145.

³⁰⁵ For the Palladion, see Dion. Hal. 1.68-69= Allen (ed.) (1912), *Iliou Persis* fr. 1. For the importance of reading Homer in terms of multiple story-traditions, see the programmatic statements of Nagy ([1979] 1999), esp. 4-9, 40-58; Nagy (1990b), 53. Nagy eschews 'intertextuality' as such; contrast Pucci (1987); but see also Edmunds (1995), 4-7; Dowden (1996); Martin (2000), esp. 61-65.

³⁰⁶ For this exclusion, compare the reference to the τέκμων of Troy by Akhilleus at *Il.* 9.418-420=684-687 ἐπεὶ οὐκέτι δῆτε τέκμων Ἰλίου αἰπυνῆς. Compare 7.30-31 (Apollo) εἰς ὃ κε τέκμων Ἰλίου εὕρωσιν, with Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 7.30-32; and 9.48-49 (Diomedes) εἰς ὃ κε τέκμων Ἰλίου εὕρωμεν. Eustathius 760, 32 van der Valk, on *Il.* 9.418f., glosses thus: τέκμων εἰπὼν τὸ ἐν Ἀχαιοῖς σκοπιμώτατον τέλος, τὴν ἄλωσιν; commentators concur; cf. Chantraine (1968-1977), s.v. τέκμαρ. On the topic, see Griffin (1977), 40, 46; Scully (1990), 36: 'Troy's mysterious *tekmôn*, "mark," which Achilles equates with the city's security (*Il.* 9.418-20), gives way more commonly than not to anthropomorphized explanations of city defense. Hektor, rather than the Palladion, keeps Troy safe.' But note Scully's subsequent comment, 37: 'In Homer, latent references to magical tales are often detected ... If these, usually older, magical or cultic elements commonly give way in Homer to more naturalistic and heroic explanations of city defense, we should not

the Palladion from this Iliadic story of Troy becomes pointedly apparent at this moment, and in lieu of its talismanic force the fall of Troy is here obliquely foreshadowed in Athene's refusal to accede to Theano's prayer for the death of Diomedes.³⁰⁷ Even if the text of this scene does not offer the audience any certainty about what this convergence might have looked like exactly, it offers instead, in the contrast between the audience's perception of the physical reaction of the goddess and the failure of the ritual participants to observe this presence, the suggestion that some kinds of presence or 'epiphany' can go unrecognised as such. The significance of this failure of perception is again, like Hektor's failure to perceive the long arm of Zeus later in the *Iliad*, one with profoundly negative implications for the Trojans themselves. The physicality of divine presence is again formulated as a problem that operates across divergences of knowledge, perception and sight. Like the long arm of Zeus, the wounds of Aphrodite and Ares, and the leaky guises of Aphrodite and Poseidon, it is within a specific frame that the goddess emerges in the embodied form of her statue, namely her decisive rejection of the ritualised supplication that the Trojan women carry out and the radical transformation in this scene of the role as protective talisman that the Palladion elsewhere fulfils for Troy. The ritualised forms that the Trojans mobilise call forth an epiphanic response, like Diomedes' prayer to Athene in *Iliad* 5; but this time, as in the case of Zeus's long arm, the presence of the god remains elusive to very people for whom its realisation might have mattered most.



overstress Homeric tendencies to purge all superstitious or magical elements'. More broadly, see Faraone (1992).

³⁰⁷ Together with Odysseus, Diomedes is a key figure in relation to the Palladion, and their partnership is replayed in a very different form in the night-time raid in *Iliad* 10; see Nagy ([1979] 1999), 34-35 with §9n4, and note the comment of Hainsworth (ed.) (1993), on *Il.* 10.243: 'Diomedes' choice of Odysseus is eminently sensible but also thematic'.

Framing epiphany

In shifting the focus of attention towards the role played by ritual in the contexts of epiphany, I want first to extend the perspectives on presence and its perception that are afforded by the examples of Zeus's long arm and the refusal of Athene by returning to the spectacular descent of Athene in *Iliad* 4 once more.³⁰⁸ In the previous section I have considered the fundamental importance of multiple perspectives. In such contexts questions of who constructs or controls the epiphany must be seen as live issues. Viewing 'divine epiphany' as a process that is variously instantiated in the interplay of presence and perception at particular moments points to the importance of the constituting frames of 'epiphanic' events. Athene's spectacular descent provides further perspectives on this problem that will orient my discussion towards the question of the relation of ritual and epiphany, and will show how epiphany and ritual become increasingly imbricated. This is not to lose sight of the disruption that interface between mortals and gods brings in its wake, but to show how such disruption need not be simply paralysing, but can even be productive within its specific contexts. I argued earlier that Athene's spectacular descent invites a response from all present, based on differently privileged degrees of perception, in such a way as to destabilise the notion of a 'true epiphany'. But I did not go very far in exploring this particular example, despite gesturing towards the shifting modalities of divine presence that lie behind the inequalities of perception in this case. My point there was to suggest that questions of perception and recognition were better thought of as problems inherently bound up in the contexts of divine epiphany rather than as possible criteria by which to limit the field of epiphany down to a subset of comparatively unproblematic instances. What I want to do now, by contrast, is examine in greater detail how the play of epiphany and presence, of appearance and embodiment, finds articulation in various strategies of relational response.

In the first place, how is Athene's presence manifested in this instance? This divine appearance is doubly marked out as being omen-like, both by the narrator and by the response of the Greeks and Trojans.³⁰⁹ I observed earlier how there is a slide of perception across the boundary of the simile itself: the

³⁰⁸ See above, pp. 56-60.

³⁰⁹ She is both a τέρας λαμπρόν for the audience, *Il.* 4.76-77, and an ambivalent sign of either war or peace for the Greeks and Trojans, 82-84.

meteor is a *τέρας* in the simile, and it is as such that the Trojans and Greeks read it ambivalently in the following lines.³¹⁰ But this presentation of divine presence simply as a sign is complicated by the narrator's perspective on the event, in which the presence of the goddess is cast in the form of a simile; and then Athene herself makes an appearance amid the Trojan army in the form of Laodokos:³¹¹

75 οἶον δ' ἀστέρα ἦκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω
 ἥ ναῦτησι τέρας ἤε στρατῶι εὐρέϊ λαῶν,
 λαμπρόν, τοῦ δέ τε πολλοὶ ἀπὸ σπινθήρες ἴενται,
 τῶι εἰκυῖ' ἦιξεν ἐπὶ χθόνα Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη,
 καδ δ' ἔθορ' ἐς μέσσον· θάμβος δ' ἔχεν εἰσορόωντας
 ...
 ἥ δ' ἀνδρὶ ἰκέλη Τρώων κατεδύσεθ' ὄμιλον,
 Λαοδόκῳ Ἀντηνορίδῃ κρατερῶι αἰχμητῇ,
 Πάνδαρον ἀντίθεον διζήμεναι, εἴ που ἐφεύροι.

How far does the visual image extend here, in the transition across the formal frame of the simile into the presence of an Athene in the guise of the Trojan Laodokos?³¹² Kirk, for instance, is particularly concerned here to observe that this sequence does not suggest 'that she still had the appearance of the "star"' at the point when the goddess leapt into the midst of the Greeks and Trojans, and that consequently their amazement does not stem from this; he wishes to avoid 'the improbability of a meteor still trailing a tail as it strikes the earth'.³¹³ But the text does not in fact offer any specific perspective on the modulations of Athene's appearance other than the fact that suddenly Athene is in the guise of Laodokos. At one point Athene is 'like' a meteor; at the next she is 'like' Laodokos.³¹⁴

In the interpretative response offered by the Greeks and Trojans the narrative already offers one strategy to overcome this problem of denomination, namely to treat Athene's meteoric descent as an omen, as

³¹⁰ See de Jong (1987), 134-135, who characterises *Il.* 4.75-80 as 'focalized doubly', which is to say: 'what for the NF₁ and his addressee has the status of a simile only, is reality for the soldiers as F₂.'

³¹¹ *Il.* 4.75-79, 86-88.

³¹² Athene as Laodokos, *Il.* 4.86-88. Compare Leaf (ed.) (1900-1902), vol. 1, on *Il.* 4.75: 'It is not easy to make out exactly *what* the people saw and marvelled at'. On this passage, see also Kullmann (1956), 90-91; Stockinger (1959), 20-21; Erbse (1980), 262-263; Dietrich (1983), 56; Kirk (ed.) (1985), on *Il.* 4.78-84; de Jong (1987), 134; W. Smith (1988), 162-163.

³¹³ Kirk (ed.) (1985), on *Il.* 4.78-84.

³¹⁴ See below, p. 129 n. 321, on the terms that express these various 'likenesses'.

suggested by the terms of the simile.³¹⁵ Treated as such, the meteor is in fact a sign of something other than itself, at which the Greeks and Trojans can only grasp in equivocal terms: πόλεμος κακός or φιλότης? In this response there is an implicit shift away from the problem of ontological denomination towards an interpretative process: the ontology of the τέρας itself ceases to be a question to the extent that it has been accepted as the basic ground of the interpretative strategy. The surface features of the wonder are brought under control insofar as they become available for interpretation. But the soldiers' interpretative response is unsatisfactory from a denominational point of view, and the audience are in a position to know this. The ambivalence of the Greek and Trojan response underlines the difficulties of interpretation and control. By contrast, the audience know something of what the image constitutes—that is, the presence of the goddess, and the resumption of battle that Athene is to set in motion—and the interpretative response framed by the narrative offers a specific focalisation of events that the audience know to be defective.

Yet for the audience, if the interpretative response is insufficient, the ontological problem remains: how far does the image extend across the frame of the simile? A resolution in the terms framed by Kirk remains elusive, not least because the denominative value of Athene's similitudinous appearance remains indeterminate. Insofar as the image is explicitly framed as a simile, it does not offer a simple denomination of how Athene's presence appears.³¹⁶ But equally, it is not an option simply to treat the operation of the simile as entirely figurative, since this would suggest that there is a 'predicative impertinence' in likening a goddess to a meteor, but who is to say that the goddess is not actually and substantially meteoric at this point?³¹⁷ 'Likeness' in such contexts can encompass both 'appearing like' and 'appearing as'.³¹⁸ Just as was the case

³¹⁵ For the intimate connection between similes and omens, see Lonsdale (1990), 113-115; Muellner (1990), esp. 75 n. 27, 98-99; and esp. Ahnhalt (1995), on *Il.* 24.314-321 where, 294, 'in employing a simile to describe a bird of omen, the passage explicitly places the audience of the poem in the role of μάντις who must attempt to divine the purposes of the comparison in order to interpret the omen'.

³¹⁶ See W. Smith (1988), 162-163: 'Such a scene ... passes back and forth between simile and transformation'. Most scholars are determined to minimise such problems: see Erbse (1980), 263, 'Zwar ist sie nicht Stern, aber sie erscheint als solcher'; de Jong (1987), 134, comparing *Il.* 17.547-552. But note Stockinger (1959), 20: 'Das Erscheinen einer Gottheit ist ein Vorgang, den adäquat zu schildern, die menschliche Sprache nicht ausreicht. So greift der Dichter zum Gleichnis.'

³¹⁷ On the operation of metaphor in terms of 'predicative impertinence', see Ricoeur ([1979] 1991), 123-124.

³¹⁸ See esp. Bushnell (1982); Pucci (1987), 110-122; W. Smith (1988); C. G. Thomas (1996). For the opposite view, see e.g. Dirlmeier (1967), 14: 'Es ist also überall zu verstehen: er gleicht einem X, ist aber nicht X.'

with the long arm of Zeus, the image operates across the boundary of the figurative and the actual in its display of divine potential. The contrast with the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* helps underline this point.³¹⁹ There the arrival of Apollo at his temple in Delphi is described similarly meteoric terms:³²⁰

- 440 ἔνθ' ἐκ νηὸς ὄρουσεν ἄναξ ἐκάεργος Ἀπόλλων
 ἀστέρι εἰδόμενος μέσσω ἥματι· τοῦ δ' ἀπὸ πολλὰ
 σπινθαρίδες πωτῶντο, σέλας δ' εἰς οὐρανὸν ἵκεν·
 ἐς δ' ἄδυτον κατέδυσσε διὰ τριπόδων ἐριτίμων.
 ἔνθ' ἄρ' ὃ γε φλόγα δαΐε πιφασκόμενος τὰ ἅ κῆλα,
 445 πᾶσαν δὲ Κρίσην κάτεχεν σέλας· αἱ δ' ὀλόλυσαν
 Κρισαίων ἄλοχοι καλλίζωνοί τε θύγατρες
 Φοίβου ὑπὸ ῥιπῆς· μέγα γὰρ δέος ἔμβाल' ἐκάστωι.

The effects of this meteoric epiphany are far from equivocal. The similitude of Apollo to a meteor is expressed in brief: ἀστέρι εἰδόμενος μέσσω ἥματι.³²¹ But the characteristics of this meteoric status extend beyond the immediate context of the simile-expression itself, and where the phrase τοῦ δέ .. ἀπό in Athene's case refers ostensibly to the star within the formal bounds of the simile, here it refers to Apollo himself—it is from the god that sparks fly.³²² This insistence upon the concrete embodiment of the god as meteor finds a logical extension in the ritual sphere: it is Apollo's fiery presence that lights the sacred hearth at Delphi, and thus his meteoric form is transformed into an ongoing presence within his temple.³²³ Thus this sequence realises Apollo's divine potential in the

³¹⁹ Allen and Sikes (edd.) (1904), on *HomHymnAp.* 441, 442 see the relationship as one of imitation (cf. Dietrich (1983), 71: 'poor imitation'), but it is better framed in terms of interaction between traditions. On the Panhellenic ambitions of the *HomHymnAp.*, see Nagy ([1979] 1999), 7-8; Clay (1989), 92-94; and Nagy (1990b), 375-376. Compare Burkert (1979), who argues for a specific connection with the Panhellenic pretensions of Polycrates. Note also the simile for Apollo's movement at *HomHymnAp.* 448, 'like thought', cf. 186; compare esp. *Il.* 15.80-83, with Janko (ed.) (1992), on 15.80-83.

³²⁰ *HomHymnAp.* 440-447. For the sequence within which this occurs, see Förstel (1979), 268-271; Miller (1986), 92-94; Clay (1989), 82; Detienne (1996-1997), 17-18.

³²¹ The participle εἰδόμενος/-η is one in a cluster of simile-expressions: ὥς, ἥντε, οἶον, εἴκυϊα, εἰκώς/-ότες, εἴκελος/-η, εἰσάμενος; see W. Smith (1988), 161-162, for the fluidity of their use; note also Vernant (1991b), 187 n. 7, on the language of similitude.

³²² Compare *Il.* 4.77, τοῦ δέ τε πολλοὶ ἀπὸ σπινθῆρες ἔενται, with *HomHymnAp.* 441-442, τοῦ δ' ἀπὸ πολλὰ | σπινθαρίδες πωτῶντο. Allen and Sikes (edd.) (1904), on *HomHymnAp.* 441, 442 also note the difference of tense in this respect. See Miller (1986), 93-94: the 'latent energies' of Apollo in his dolphin guise 'are released with a sudden violence that is all the more dazzling for the contrast with what preceeds'; 'The first two metamorphoses seem to mark the lower and upper limits, so to speak, of Apollo's divinity'.

³²³ See Förstel (1979), 270: 'das kult-begründende ewige Feuer'. Also Clay (1989), 82; Detienne (1996-1997), 17-18 and 26 n. 118, contrasting Hermes' earlier role in introducing fire in a technological form on Delos at *HomHymnAp.* 108-142. Compare Apollo's ritual instruction to the Cretans at *HomHymnAp.* 486-501, and the subsequent procession to the

progress from simile to embodiment to an ongoing presence in the context of ritualised activity.³²⁴ The 'ironic disparity' that ensues in the exchange between Apollo in his guise as a young man and the Cretan sailors is soon resolved by Apollo's markedly formal announcement of his identity.³²⁵ In this respect the multiplication of metamorphic images plays a basic role in the performance of Apollo's identity.³²⁶ Apollo not only appears 'like' a meteor in the middle of the day, but he also appears 'as' a meteor, and this divine potential for seeming and being is integral to the god's display.

By contrast, Athene's meteoric presence disappears from view as suddenly as it appeared.³²⁷ In its place Athene takes on a concealed form whose strategies of misdirection achieve a concrete outcome with Pandaros's action in breaking the truce.³²⁸ Athene's mission from Zeus is thus fulfilled, and since it is precisely this misdirection that is Athene's goal the denominative problem presented by her meteoric descent is in keeping with her purpose. There is no call for the transformation of this presence in ongoing terms like those of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*—or rather, there is a positive need for her presence to remain a trace—and with the completion of her purpose Athene immediately drops from sight. Here the fluidity of the goddess in transformative terms leaves underdetermined the verbal distinction between 'appearing like' and 'appearing as' that would underpin the normal figurative operation of the simile. Thus the image of the goddess collapses the distinction between simile and actuality in the same way as the image of the long arm of Zeus collapses the distinction between the god's power acting from afar and the presence of the god. If the audience have privileged knowledge about the presence of Athene, in light of which the Greek and Trojan response is seen to be insufficient, it is still the case that their own perception of Athene is bedevilled by the indeterminacy of appearing like a meteor. Here the question of who 'controls' the epiphany functions as an interrogative counterpart to the

temple, 514-523. For the sense in which the *Homeric Hymns* offer the god's perspective on epiphany, see Sowa (1984), 241.

³²⁴ Compare García (2002).

³²⁵ *HomHymnAp.* 451-485, esp. 480: εἰμὶ δ' ἐγὼ Διὸς υἱός, 'Ἀπόλλων δ' εὐχομαι εἶναι. For the point that such self-naming is unusual in epic speech, see Muellner (1976), 74-75 n. 9; for εὐχομαι as 'say (proudly, accurately, contentiously)', and not 'boast, claim', 76-78. For the 'ironic disparity', see Clay (1989), 82.

³²⁶ For the 'omnipresence' of Apollo in the *HomHymnAp.*, see Thalmann (1984), 15, 64-73.

³²⁷ Compare Zeus's instruction, *Il.* 4.70: αἶψα μάλ' ἐς στρατὸν ἐλθέ.

³²⁸ *Il.* 4.92-126; note 104: τῶι δὲ φρένας ἄφρονι πεῖθεν. Athene's misdirection goes so far as to include the instruction to invoke Apollo, 101-103, carried out at 119-121; for such a strategy, compare *Od.* 3.41-62: Athene in disguise instigates a prayer to Poseidon which she fulfills herself.

narrative slide across the frame of the simile. The characters of the epic see a meteor; the audience of the epic perceive the goddess descending 'like' a meteor; and in a meaningful sense both perspectives are correct and inherent features of the performance of Athene's descent.

The responses of audience and participants all contribute to the play of Athene's presence here. In terms of evocation of interpretative response, signs or omens are to the characters within the poems as similes are to the epic's audience; but an instance such as this is confusing to the extent that it functions simultaneously as sign, simile and image and thus implicates both audience and characters in a response that is similarly interpretative.³²⁹ The potential overflow of the image across the boundaries of the simile confronts the audience with a break in signification that correlates with the teratological challenge posed by Athene's appearance for the Greeks and Trojans.³³⁰ This reinforces the point I raised earlier, namely the extent to which an 'epiphany' is something to be realised in the play between divine presence—across the breadth of potential this represents—and the perceptual capacities of mortals. But more than this, it raises as a live issue the sort of response it is possible to make in the face of such epiphanic play. The strategies of omen-response are one means—relatively unsuccessful in this case—of recreating the signifying potential of such images within a more manageable structure.³³¹ In this respect, it is significant that omen-responses are found in the Homeric poems that are expressed in the formal terms of a simile: the analogical form in such cases offers an interpretative strategy and thus a means of control.³³² This

³²⁹ On the relationship between signs and similes in Homer, see esp. Muellner (1990); Ahnhalt (1995). Note de Jong (1987), 123ff.: the majority of comparisons and similes in the Homeric poems are oriented towards the audience. See also Moulton (1977), 15; Wofford (1992), 33-39; Watrous (1999), 174-175.

³³⁰ Challenge: see Nagy (1990a), 206-207, 211, on the need 'to decode the various signs encoded by Zeus, which is a hard thing to do', citing Hesiod *Works and Days* 483-484: ἄλλοτε δ' ἄλλοιός Ζηνὸς νόος αἰγίοχοιο, | ἀργαλέος δ' ἄνδρεσσι καταθητοῖσι νοῆσαι.

³³¹ For recurrent features in such 'Deutungsreden', see Stockinger (1959), 147-152.

³³² See e.g. *Il.* 2.326-329 with Muellner (1990), 75 n. 27, and *Od.* 15.174-178 with Bushnell (1982), 3-5. See further Stockinger (1959), 147-148; N. Austin (1975), 115-118; Lonsdale (1990), 112-115. For the effectiveness of the language of analogy, compare the ὦδε ... ὦς formula (cf. ὦδε ... ὦς at *Il.* 12.217-227 in Poulydamas's omen-interpretation) used in the self-curse that forms the coda to the treaty between the Greek and the Trojans at *Il.* 3.300; this is *similia similibus*, on which see Faraone (1991), 8; Faraone (1992), 118-119. For this type of persuasive analogy more generally, see Tambiah (1973) and Lloyd (1979). On the interpretative aspects of analogy, see Bell (1992), 111-112: 'For Tambiah, ... the situations modelled in ritual act either like "signals," which evoke certain responses, or like "signs," which can explain other activities in the same way that a blueprint can explain a house or the building of a house.'

interpretative process can amount to a literal reworking, or what might be termed an 'adaptive narrative', carried out by a character within the epic on the narrative of the omen that the epic's narrator has just told.³³³ But here, the image of Athene's meteoric descent seems to have the potential to transgress its frame, and accordingly its significance remains an interpretative challenge.³³⁴

Scholarly responses to such images not infrequently deploy strategies that are similar to those applied to the reading of omens within the text, in that the series of images that the text offers is reworked interpretatively for what it points to, for what the image tells.³³⁵ I discussed some scholarly responses to the image of Athene's descent earlier in this chapter, in particular the meteorological formulations offered by Kullmann and Dietrich.³³⁶ The stories that they tell in response to Athene's descent are predicated upon naturalistic frameworks, and they gesture at a conflation of divine activity and 'natural' phenomena that goes back to a view of ancient religion as a kind of pre-scientific mentality. Interestingly, their versions are different: Kullmann valorises Homer by comparison with the more primitive 'beliefs' that lie behind the image precisely because Homer expresses the image as a comparison; Dietrich by contrast elides the simile form in writing confidently of an epiphany in the form of a natural phenomenon, whose very naturalness valorises the Homeric description of Athene's descent within the terms of Dietrich's search for plausibility.³³⁷ The reading strategies deployed by Kullmann and Dietrich offer transformations of the image itself, and they rewrite its form and thus its significance in accordance with priorities oriented towards the contexts of their own writing. This is not wrong in itself: interpretative strategies are a basic part of our ability to make sense, and the adaptive narratives that emerge in such contexts constitute a fundamental, if perilous, form of the ethnography that this

³³³ For 'adaptive narrative', see Abbott (2002), 100-122. This term is less exact than those used by Genette ([1982] 1997), esp. 1-10; it could be regarded as a combination of Genette's 'metatextuality' (glossable as commentary) and 'hypertextuality' (glossable as transformation) extended beyond the sphere of 'literariness'. Compare also Todorov ([1971] 1977), 238-241, on reading, interpretation and description. For an example, see esp. Bushnell (1982), 4-5, on Poulydamas's reworking of the narrator's narrative in his interpretation at *Il.* 12.210-229: there is repetition of 200-203 in 218-221, omission of 203-207, and the addition of a new ending in 221-222. On prophecy and narrative, see esp. Peradotto (1990), 59-98; Dickson (1995), 53-56, 60-64.

³³⁴ Ahnhalt (1995), 294, characterises *Il.* 24.314-321 in similar terms: 'in employing a simile to describe a bird of omen, the passage explicitly places the audience of the poem in the role of μάντις who must attempt to divine the purposes of the comparison in order to interpret the omen'.

³³⁵ For 'misreading' in such contexts, see Bushnell (1982).

³³⁶ See above, pp. 58-59.

³³⁷ Kullmann (1956), 90-91; Dietrich (1983), 56.

sort of academic work must involve.³³⁸ But what are the most appropriate frames? What are the appropriate limits on what we may make connect? Contestation over legitimacy and authority is the inevitable concomitant of such choices.

The underlying currency of such interpretative strategies—what is manipulated and put at risk in the hope of return—is the ordering of people's values and commitments.³³⁹ Hektor's irate assertion in reaction to the omen-interpretation given by Poulydamas in *Iliad* 12 is exemplary for the significance that contestation over 'appropriateness' may take on in such a context: εἰς οἰωνὸς ἄριστος, ἀμύνεσθαι περὶ πατρὸς.³⁴⁰ But such contestation is no less a feature of the reception of the Homeric epics, and the treatment of religion is a particular problem area in this respect where our reading practices are eloquent, if often unwitting, testaments to what is 'appropriate'.³⁴¹ Compare, for example, a well-known moment in *Odyssey* 21:³⁴²

410 δεξιτερῇ δ' ἄρα χεὶρὶ λαβὼν πειρήσατο νευρῆς·

³³⁸ For a critique of ethnography, see Sperber (1985a), 9-34; Clifford and Marcus (1986). On the future of ethnography, see Marcus and Fisher ([1986] 1999) with the introduction to the 2nd ed. On the presentation of ritual as a 'text' to be interpreted, see Bell (1992), 15-16.

³³⁹ This process involves the 'misrecognition' characteristic of strategies of ritualisation. See Bell (1992), 108-110, esp. 109: '[Ritualization] is a way of acting that sees itself as *responding* to a place, event, force, problem, or tradition. It tends to see itself as the natural or appropriate thing to do in the circumstances. Ritualization does not see how it actively creates place, force, event, and tradition, how it redefines or generates the circumstances to which it is responding.' For the 'politics of interpretation', see Mitchell (ed.) (1983); note esp. the response to H. White (1983) by Eagleton (1983), who stresses that politics (morals, values etc.) are not simply *chosen* by people, but are also demanded by how they are *acted upon*.

³⁴⁰ *Il.* 12.243. The whole exchange: *Il.* 12.200-251. Note Hektor's comment at 232: οἶσθα καὶ ἄλλον μῦθον ἀμείνονα τοῦδε νοῆσαι. The omen and Poulydamas's interpretation opens up the ground of dispute; cf. Murnaghan (1987), 82: '[Hektor's obtuseness] represents an unavoidable conflict built into the heroic system'; differently, Bushnell (1982), 6, sees Hektor's response as a secularisation, but her opposition of the sacred to the cultural/human obscures the shared ground of dispute over what is appropriate. For Poulydamas's role, see Redfield ([1975] 1994), 143-147; Schofield (1986), 26-30. On the sequence of Hektor/Poulydamas scenes, see Dickson (1995), 12, 134-139. A reversed version of this contestation is found in the exchange between Priamos and Hekabe at *Il.* 24.191-321, where Hekabe's verbal and physical dissent from Priamos's plans constitutes an ὄρνις κακός, 219, for Priamos as he prepares to set out; but this omen is superseded by the eagle-omen from Zeus for which Priamos prays, 308-321, in order to confirm his purpose to the Trojan community. See below, pp. 160-161.

³⁴¹ For a pertinent example from a different time and place, see Loraux (2002), 19, on the exclusion of the account of the gods fighting alongside the democrats in Xen. *Hell.* 2.4.14 from the scholarly history of 404-403 BCE; this exclusion is counterbalanced by its inclusion within an anthropologically framed discussions of the 'politico-religious', but this counterbalancing itself confirms the distance between the political and 'the *myth* of the political'. Apropos history and literature, see Goldhill (1999).

³⁴² *Od.* 21.410-415.

ἡ δ' ὑπὸ καλὸν ἄεισε, χελιδόνι εἰκέλη αὐδήν.
 μνηστῆρσιν δ' ἄρ' ἄχος γέμετο μέγα, πᾶσι δ' ἄρα χρῶς
 ἐτράπετο. Ζεὺς δὲ μεγάλ' ἔκτυπε σήματα φαίνων·
 γήθησέν τ' ἄρ' ἔπειτα πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,
 415 ὅττι ῥά οἱ τέρας ἦκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω.

In the midst of a series of signs and reactions of signs, at a pivotal moment of the epic, the image of the bow-string's swallow-like voice has demanded interpretation here.³⁴³ In the swallow-simile, scholars have read a signal of the hero's return that is framed as such both by reference to a specific pattern of bird-imagery associated with Athene in the *Odyssey* itself, and by appeal to the symbolism of the swallow across a range of texts and contexts found within a very broadly conceived Greek cultural world, ancient and modern.³⁴⁴ Simile assumes the status of omen, and the fineness of the bow-string's swallow-voice assumes the mantle of implicit narrative foreshadowing: 'surely καλόν here can have the overtones of a *favourable* omen'.³⁴⁵ Even the bow conspires as a sign of Odysseus's return, yet still the Suitors fail to realise.³⁴⁶ But not all agree. Fernandez-Galiano expresses suspicion of these excessively signifying lines and downplays interpretative readings of the swallow-simile: 'we may say, simply, that the simile implies the same animistic tendency to endow inanimate objects with life as we saw in the simile in xxi 48'.³⁴⁷ So Zeus's thunder 'is a melodramatic interpolation', and of particular concern here is how some lines 'seem to anticipate future events in an unnecessary way': Fernandez-Galiano cites von der Mühl for the premature nature of the suitor's fear, since they will still at the beginning of *Odyssey* 22 suppose that Antinoos's death might have been accidental.³⁴⁸ Of course, one might reply that this is precisely the point: the Suitors are unable to interpret even their own fear correctly, just as they were

343 Signs: the right hand with which Odysseus grips the bow, *Od.* 21.410; the swallow-like voice, 411; the emotional leakage (χρῶς ἐτράπετο) of the suitor's ἄχος, 412-413; Zeus's thunderous sign, both σήματα, 413, and τέρας, 415; Odysseus's rejoicing, a sign of doom for the Suitors, 414.

344 See N. Austin (1975), 246-247; Moulton (1977), 183-139; Losada (1985); Borthwick ([1988] 1998). On the 'singing' in *Od.* 21.411, see R. B. Rutherford (1985), 142-143.

345 Borthwick ([1988] 1998), 16. For the basic importance of bird omens in signifying the return of Odysseus, see *Od.* 15.160-178 (eagle and goose, with Helen's interpretation), 15.525-534 (hawk and pigeon, interpreted by Theoklymeos to Telemakhos here and to Penelope at 17.157-161), and 19.536-558 (Penelope's dream of eagle and pet geese, with Odysseus's interpretation). A good discussion of the polysemy of the last instance, even against the narrative flow, has been made by Pratt (1994); see also Katz (1991), 146-147; Felson (1994), 31-33, 59-60, 157 n. 48.

346 For the Suitors' systemic failure to interpret, see Murnaghan (1987), 56-90; Reece (1993), 181-187, 200-201.

347 Fernández-Galiano (ed.) (1991), on *Od.* 21.411.

348 *Od.* 22.31-32. See Fernández-Galiano (ed.) (1991), 131-132, and on *Od.* 21.412-415.

earlier unable to interpret the 'unquenchable' laughter that Athene inflicted upon them.³⁴⁹ And the narrator will later focalise the Suitors' failure to realise the significance of events in no uncertain terms: τὸ δὲ νήπιοι οὐκ ἐνόησαν, ἢ ὥς δὴ σφιν καὶ πᾶσιν ὀλέθρου πείρατ' ἐφῆπτο.³⁵⁰ But more important here is how each of these readings enacts a particular set of choices about what material beyond the immediate context it is legitimate to connect with the bow-string's swallow-song. In this respect, readers of the *Odyssey* engage in a process of interpretation that is the positive counterpart of the Suitors' failure of interpretation, a failure which is presented within the narrative frame of the epic as being of the greatest importance, as another marker of the Suitors' impending death. In realising the import of such signs within the Odyssean narrative, audiences of the epic realise the Suitors' abject failure in this respect. The audience's own practice points up the apparent inadequacy of these figures, with the specific narrative and ideological consequences that this connotes.

What we find in such contexts are practices of interpretation that are on the one hand authorised by status and convention, yet also seek to demonstrate their own legitimacy by close reference to the demands of the immediate context, at least as these demands are formulated in the process of interpretation itself. Such interpretation is framed in such a way that its apparent authority is derived from a mutually-confirming interpenetration of speech and the world.³⁵¹ In this respect, both omen-interpretation and the kinds of inter- and intra-textual reading found in classical scholarship may each be understood as adaptive narratives.³⁵² At such points, narrativisation approaches ritualisation: both constitute ways to articulate the world and an orientation within it, and thus to structure the structures of our activity in that world. In this emphasis on practice and structuration, I follow Bell's arguments on ritual when I underline how narrativisation and ritualisation are each not so much things that we do in the world, but ways of doing that reshape the world in our relation to it.³⁵³ Ritualisation connotes practice, and what ensues is the

³⁴⁹ The divinely caused laughter: *Od.* 20.345-358. On the thematics of the scene and the role of Theoklymenos, see Erbse (1972), 51-54; Fenik (1974), 241-242; Levine (1982); Colakis (1985-1986); R. B. Rutherford (ed.) (1992), on *Od.* 20.346-386 and 346; Cook (1995), 148; Guidorizzi (1997).

³⁵⁰ *Od.* 22.32-33. On such comments, see esp. Dickson (1995), 179-181; also de Jong (1987), 86-89; Janko (ed.) (1992), on 16.46-48.

³⁵¹ Compare Dickson (1995), 56-58, on the interpenetration of textual and cultural frameworks in the authority of Khalkas's prophecy in *Il.* 1.

³⁵² For broader discussions of such reading strategies in classics, see esp. Edmunds (1995) and Sharrock and Morales (edd.) (2000); in reading Homer, see above, p. 124 n. 305.

³⁵³ See esp. Bell (1992), drawing on Bourdieu (1977).

'reactualization of the ordinary world amid the virtuality of the rite'.³⁵⁴ In preferring to speak of ritualisation rather than ritual what is stressed is the undesirability of defining ritual within a categorical typology of formality, stereotypy and repetition, however much such features may be frequent concomitants of ritualised activity.³⁵⁵ As such the term ritualisation denotes a way of acting among other ways of acting, not least of which is narrative. I should make this clear: ritualisation and narrative are not reducible one to the other, but both are modes of practice whose strategic purposes within the world actually obscure their constitutive force in framing that world.³⁵⁶ For the Suitors, as for Poulydamas and Hektor, such interpretations and failures to interpret always implicate the immediate contours of action: the consequences are real. Likewise, for audiences of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, what is at stake is nothing less than the contours of the narratives in which they are participating. In images such as the meteoric descent of Athene, or indeed the long arm of Zeus, our interpretative endeavours have consequences for the worlds in which we live.

Some of the issues involved here, particularly in response to the slide of manifest divine presence into the operation and interpretation of signs and omens, have been raised in various forms before now. Particular cases in point are the bird-like divine appearances and bird-omens in the Homeric epics.³⁵⁷ I raised this issue briefly above in relation to the use of the theatrical metaphor of disguise when discussing the appearances of the gods.³⁵⁸ The addition of bird-

³⁵⁴ See Kapferer (1997), 179-181; note the particular dynamic of actuality and virtuality: virtuality is a concentration and magnification of actuality, and thus 'is its own reality and is lived as such'; this is distinct from the Geertzian conception of models of and for reality.

³⁵⁵ For stereotypy, see above p. 121 n. 289; but, on adherence to formality and stereotypy as definitive characteristics of ritual, note the criticism made by Kapferer ([1983] 1991), 3-4, 330 nn. 1-2; and Kapferer (1997), 178: such stereotypy is a part of the technology of ritualised activity, as opposed being constitutive of ritualised activity itself.

³⁵⁶ See Bell (1992), 69-92, and 140. For a recent discussion of potential relations of narrative and ritual in the *Odyssey*, and narrative and legal practice, see Jamison (1999).

³⁵⁷ Bird-like appearances: Athene and Apollo, *Il.* 7.58-61; Hypnos, 14.286-291; Thetis, 18.614-617; Athene, 19.350-351; Athene, *Od.* 1.319-324; Athene, 3.371-372; Hermes, 5.51; Leukothea, 5.351-353; Athene, 22.237-240. For bird-omens as the manifest will of a god, note the following instances: Zeus sends eagle, *Il.* 8.245-252; Athene sends heron, 10.274-282; Zeus sends eagle, 24.315-321; Zeus sends eagle, *Od.* 2.146-156; for other bird-omens, see *Il.* 2.299-332; 12.200-251; 13.821-823; *Od.* 15.160-178; 15.525-534, cf. 17.157-161; 19.536-558; 20.235-246. For discussion, see Dirlmeier (1967); Fauth (1975), 248-249; Bannert (1978); Dietrich (1979); Erbse (1980); Schnapp-Gourbeillon (1981), 185-190; Bushnell (1982); Dietrich (1983), 57-60; Easterling (1987); Pucci (1987), 114-119; Bannert (1988), 57-68; C. G. Thomas (1996); Friedrich (1997).

³⁵⁸ See above, pp. 111-112. For the language of theatrical disguise in relation to bird-like appearances of the gods, see Erbse (1980), 273: 'Der Dichter hat die Tiergestalt ... zur

omens to the mix further complicates the situation. That there is a relationship between these various forms of bird(like) appearance has been recognised, but an interpretative problem has remained, namely to explain how exactly these appearances relate and what this relation signifies. Podlecki, for example, writes of bird omens 'branching off' to bird similes on the one hand, and to bird epiphanies on the other; thus Athene's appearances in *Odyssey* 1 and 3 'are to be understood as a sub-class of omen'.³⁵⁹ Nilsson explored the implications of this slide within an influential history of Greek religion that appealed to Minoan and Mycenaean background as the basis for later Greek religious practice: the relation of birds and gods in Homeric poetry could be understood in terms of an underlying history of belief.³⁶⁰ In following this historically framed approach to the divine bird-similes, later scholars such as Scott are not alone: when the poet 'sang of gods, similes of birds were at hand and easily adaptable to the actions of divine figures'.³⁶¹ The underlying logic of this explanation has been pursued to its full extent in what Pucci has called the 'long-winded *querelle*' over the degree of theriomorphosis indicated by the set of instances in the Homeric epics where gods appear like birds, and its relation to religious practices: various versions are possible, from simple similes through to theriomorphosis itself, even if temporary.³⁶² More productive are responses which give closer attention to the problems of point of view raised at a narrative level by the passages concerned.³⁶³ In the wake of Pucci's contribution, there is no need to rehearse the terms of this debate as such. Pucci is right to stress the 'irreverent or edifying innuendos that are complex and undecidable' in such instances, when he teases his readers with the reticence of the epic narrative that confronts them.³⁶⁴ But I think that he is too schematic when he makes a contrast between the supposed knowledge of the poet, the sight of the epic characters concerned, and the contrasting delusion or blindness that lures the audience of the epic to try 'to make sense of the story as though we were really present at

bloßen Maske gewissermaßen degradiert ... Homers Olympier können in solche Kostüme schlüpfen, wenn sie, auf Wahrung ihrer Heiligkeit bedacht, verborgen bleiben und ihre Nähe nur ahnen lassen wollen.'

³⁵⁹ Podlecki (1967), 14-15.

³⁶⁰ Nilsson (1968), vol. 1, 290-292.

³⁶¹ W. C. Scott (1974), 78. Compare Kullmann (1956), 91-92; Pollard (1977), 155-161; Erbse (1980), 273: 'die Tiergestalt, Residuum einer älteren, aber im archaischen Griechenland noch immer lebendigen Form des Gottesvorstellung'; Schnapp-Gourbeillon (1981), 185-190; Dietrich (1983), 57-59; Lonsdale (1990), 115-116.

³⁶² Pucci (1987), 114; cf. Erbse (1980), 259: 'Das Problem ist so alt wie die Homererklärung'. Arguing that they are similes: Dirlmeier (1967). Against this in various forms: Bannert (1978); Dietrich (1979); Erbse (1980); S. West (ed.) (1988), on *Od.* 3.371-372.

³⁶³ See esp. Bushnell (1982); Pucci (1987), 110-120.

³⁶⁴ Pucci (1987), 120.

the events'.³⁶⁵ In fact, the long arm of Zeus, and the divine various appearances in *Iliad* 5 show that these configurations are liable to take different shape at different moments in the epic, and for specific narrative effect.

A major part of the poet's narrative practice lies precisely in the interplay between, and continual reconfiguration of, various points of view within the epic and our various responses to them. In this respect, at least, the narrative has no less to offer us than it might have offered 'Homer and his audience'.³⁶⁶ The unattainable prospect of uncovering the substantive 'belief' of Homer's contemporaries was never a key that would solve these puzzles. Epic narrative offers access to an exemplary past world that must have been strange for all its audiences, and for all its audiences the epic narrative is an education.³⁶⁷ Education in this context is to be understood hyperliterally as a 'leading out' of audiences' senses into this world, by means of the power of the Muses, a power that is 'present' in ways that mortals can never be: herein lies an fundamental lack that is reiterated even as it is addressed.³⁶⁸ The *Odyssey* addresses itself metapoetically to this task: we are each of us a Telemakhos.³⁶⁹ The challenges offered by narratives of divine appearance are an integral part of this process.

I want to look at one example from among the set of material comprised by these bird-like appearances and bird-omens, namely the bird-departure of Athene in *Odyssey* 3. What this illustrates in exemplary fashion is one way in

³⁶⁵ Pucci (1987), 119.

³⁶⁶ For the comparative absence of occasionality as a feature of the Panhellenic scope of Homer, see esp. Nagy (1990b), 191-192; Nagy (1996a), 54-63. In relation to bird-epiphany, Pucci (1987), 119, states: 'In our present text no empirical referent can be valid, since the religious narrative suspends all empirical reality ... the only valid referent might be the belief of Homer and his audience about the nature and theriomorphic power of their gods'. Pucci's basic point here about the inaccessibility of a point of reference is well taken, even if the prospect of 'the belief of Homer' is less useful.

³⁶⁷ For epic as a process and a promise, see Lynn-George (1988), 37-41, 271-272. See also Martin (1993), for epics as 'products of an elegiac urge for touching heroic ages past', and the necessary complexity of education that results from this. For Homer in the history of Greek education, see above, p. 35 n. 135.

³⁶⁸ For the Muses' present-ness, see esp. *Il.* 2.485-486: ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαὶ ἐστε, πάρεστε τε, ἴστέ τε πάντα, ἢ ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος ὄλον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν. See above, pp. 34-39. Peradotto (1990), 31, wants to assimilate poet and gods 'above history' in 'the narrator's sense of power over his materials', but see Bergren (1982), 84-85, for a difference of enunciation between epic and hymn: 'The epic is cast by its opening invocation as the voice of the Muse ... but the closing apostrophe makes the hymn the poet's own speech'. See most recently Minchin (2001), 161-180, with further references. For the Muses' presence, see Dodds (1951), 80-81, 100 n. 116; Nagy ([1979] 1999), 16-17, 95; Rudhardt (1988), 49-52; Goldhill (1991), 69-70; Ford (1992), 60-62; Dickson (1995), 87-89, 99 n. 77.

³⁶⁹ See esp. Martin (1993), 239-240: Telemakhos is both internal focalizer and emblem of the ending of epic art; also Pucci (1998c), 171-175; Murnaghan (2002).

which the process of recognising divine presence might be managed in practice.³⁷⁰ The strategies put into play by Nestor are ritualised and evocative of a set of narratives of immediate significance within the frame of Telemakhos's journey through his father's social world.³⁷¹ Up to the moment of her departure, Athene has been accompanying Telemakhos in the guise of Mentor; but, immediately upon announcing her departure, the figure of Mentor disappears and Athene departs 'like a lammergeyer'.³⁷²

ὥς ἄρα φωνήσας ἀπέβη γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη
 φήνῃ εἰδομένη· θάμβος δ' ἔλε πάντας Ἀχαιοὺς,
 θαύμαζεν δ' ὁ γεραιός, ὅπως ἴδεν ὀφθαλμοῖσι·

Pucci has discussed ably how this moment plays with the different perspectives afforded audience and characters: the privileged perspective of the audience on Athene's presence is suddenly overturned by the image with which she departs, which the characters of the epic see but the audience does not.³⁷³ Again, the figure of 'likeness' blurs the boundaries of metaphor and actuality and the mechanisms of transformation remain provocatively indeterminate. Pucci lays his stress almost entirely upon this undecidability of the figure from the point of view of the audience, and so he does not consider in detail what Nestor's example shows us as a response to the problems inherent in the image of Athene's departure; he simply characterises Nestor's response in somewhat dismissive terms as an 'accurate guess'.³⁷⁴ But what Nestor does in fact is to embark upon a process of negotiation between his perceptions and his knowledge both of the potential modalities of divine presence and of the possible narratives within which such presence might be comprehended.³⁷⁵ It is this process that I want to stress in considering how divine presence is

³⁷⁰ For an alternative education in how to recognise a 'goddess', see Goldhill (1988), 24-26, on Odysseus and Nausicaa at *Od.* 6.149-152; on the simile, see Watrous (1999).

³⁷¹ For Telemakhos's *παίδευσις*, see Martin (1993), esp. 229-234, on Telemakhos's epithet *θεοειδής*; 232: 'the formula marks out Homer's handling of this traditional theme, which we can call "the hero grows up"'. See also Reinhardt ([1960] 1997b), 222-225; H. W. Clarke (1963), 140-141; G. P. Rose (1967); N. Austin (1975), 182-191; Finley (1978), 139-158; Apthorp (1980); R. B. Rutherford (1985), 138-139 and n. 34; Murnaghan (1987), 158-166; Goldhill (1988), 19; Tracy (1990), 3-26; Dickson (1995), 181-195; Murnaghan (2002).

³⁷² *Od.* 3.371-373. For the identification of the bird, see S. West (ed.) (1988), on *Od.* 3.371-372.

³⁷³ Pucci (1987), 115-120.

³⁷⁴ Pucci (1987), 117-118. Such a critical perspective on Nestor is frequent: see Falkner ([1989] 1995), 35-36; also Schofield (1986), 26-30.

³⁷⁵ For Nestor and narration—Nestor's 'mnemonic art'—see Atchity (1978), 260-264; Falkner ([1989] 1995), 14-22; Dickson (1995), esp. 81-85. On Homeric prayer and narrative, see esp. Lang (1975); Morrison (1991); Lateiner (1997), 265-270. See below, p. 147 nn. 405, 407.

'recognised'. Nestor's adaptive narrativisation of this problematic moment recasts the eddy created by Athene's departure within a specific, strategic frame.

The response upon which Nestor embarks immediately following the departure of the uncanny bird-sign of Athene is structured in several ways. In the first place, Nestor relates Telemakhos's situation directly to the precedent offered by his father, Odysseus. The indeterminacy of Athene's bird-sign is given structure—and thus meaning and an implicit authority—by Nestor in relation to what he knows of Odysseus.³⁷⁶

- 375 Τηλεμάχου δ' ἔλε χεῖρα, ἔπος τ' ἔφατ' ἔκ τ' ὀνόμαζεν.
 " ὦ φίλος, οὐ σε ἔολπα κακὸν καὶ ἀναλκιν ἔσεσθαι,
 εἰ δὴ τοι νέωι ὦδε θεοὶ πομπῆες ἔπονται.
 οὐ μὲν γάρ τις ὄδ' ἄλλος Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχόντων,
 ἀλλὰ Διὸς θυγάτηρ, κυδίστη τριτογένεια,
 ἣ τοι καὶ πατέρ' ἐσθλὸν ἐν Ἀργείοισιν ἐτίμα.

The reasoning process through which Nestor negotiates the equivocal sign of divinity takes two steps: first is Nestor's identification of the Mentor/lammergeyer complex as a god, by which Telemakhos has apparently been escorted; second is his identification of this god as Athene on the basis of the precedent of Odysseus.³⁷⁷ The first step is marked by the evidential particle, δὴ, and the deictic adverb, ὦδε, each of which function as verbal gestures by which Nestor directs Telemakhos' perceptual capacities at what he cannot initially denominate any more precisely than as a θεός, in generalising statement.³⁷⁸ The second step comes as a development of this denominative beginning. It is marked first by the sequential μὲν γάρ and the deitic ὄδε which together carry the previous verbal gestures forward, and second by the evidential τοι that marks the point at which the precedent of Odysseus is brought to bear upon the problem. At a moment such as this, the processes of memory and recollection—of making connections—and of perception are one and the same.³⁷⁹ The complex sensory and cognitive eddy induced by the flux of Mentor into the departing lammergeyer is thus given a specific shape and

³⁷⁶ *Od.* 3.374-379.

³⁷⁷ Compare *Od.* 3.201-224, esp. 218-222: εἰ γάρ σ' ὥς ἐθέλοι φιλέειν γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη, | ὥς τότε Ὀδυσσεὺς περικήδετο κυδαλίμοιο | δῆμωι ἐνὶ Τρώων ... | οὐ γάρ πω ἴδον ὦδε θεοὺς ἀναφανδὰ φιλεῦντας, | ὥς κείνωι ἀναφανδὰ παρίστατο Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη. On the dynamics of the exchange between Nestor and Telemakhos, see Nagy (1990a), 298.

³⁷⁸ 'Gods': *Od.* 3.376. For evidential δὴ, see Bakker (1997), 75-79; see also above, p. 95 n. 181.

³⁷⁹ For the assimilation of memory and perception, recall Ford (1992), 53: 'The function of this memory is... a psychological experience, to change the present frame of awareness'; see above, p. 36.

meaning in the denominative statement ὅδ' ... Διὸς θυγάτηρ, κυδίστη τριτογένεια. The interpretative circle that comprises the 'epiphany' is not joined up until this point, when Nestor utters the denominating epithet of the goddess, in the absence of the departed goddess herself.

Immediately after this realisation of the epiphany of Athene in relation to Telemakhos, Nestor then extends the circle he has created to encompass himself and his own family.³⁸⁰ The ritualised speech-act Nestor puts into play to achieve this aim is that of prayer:³⁸¹

- 380 ἀλλά, ἄνασσ', ἴληθι, δίδωθι δέ μοι κλέος ἐσθλόν,
 αὐτῶι καὶ παίδεσσι καὶ αἰδοίηι παρακοίτι·
 σοὶ δ' αἶ ἐγὼ ῥέξω βοῦν ἦνιν εὐρυμέτωπον,
 ἄδμήτην, ἦν οὐ πω ὑπὸ ζυγὸν ἤγαγεν ἀνὴρ·
 τὴν τοι ἐγὼ ῥέξω χρυσὸν κέρασιν περιχέυας. "
 385 ὥς ἔφατ' εὐχόμενος, τοῦ δ' ἔκλυε Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη.

The ritualised language into which Nestor launches here constitutes an alternative take on the mode of structuration that was initially exemplified in his recognition of Athene by specific reference to the life-narratives of Telemakhos and his father Odysseus. This time, Nestor negotiates the epiphany in relation to himself and his family by means of the performative language of prayer, and his offer of sacrifice sets up another circle, this time encompassing Athene and the household of Nestor. In doing so, Nestor begins another emergent narrative in the sequences of ritualised action that follow his promise of sacrifice, within which the presence of the goddess can be realised further in its 'epiphanic' dimensions.

The ritualised process of prayer that Nestor engages in here offers a template for the ensuing narratives of libation and sacrifice.³⁸² This future action will become a counterpart of the reference to Odysseus and his past that Nestor made in his initial recognition of Athene's epiphany in relation to Telemakhos. But the libation and sacrifice also constitute a further actualisation of the relation between Nestor, his family and Athene that Nestor has introduced by means of the performative language of prayer. Nestor takes control, within limits. In this respect, Nestor finds a means to assert himself over a situation that might, in

³⁸⁰ For Nestor's hyper-awareness of prayer, compare *Il.* 15.372-374, where he invokes another's prayer within his prayer to Zeus, a recursive embedding of prayer within prayer. On this prayer, see Mulder (1930), 8; Lang (1975), 311.

³⁸¹ *Od.* 3.380-385.

³⁸² *Od.* 3.386-472: there is a libation, 390-395, night intervenes, then the next day is taken up with preparations, sacrifice and feasting, 404-472.

other circumstances and if it had remained unrecognised, have seemed far more sinister; success and failure in the recognition of divine signs and divine presence is a fundamental theme of the *Odyssey* that will be developed most explicitly in relation to the return of Odysseus to his palace on Ithaka with its overtones of theoxeny.³⁸³ The success of Nestor's strategy is marked initially by the narrator with the 'hearing' by Athene of Nestor's prayer: τοῦ δ' ἔκλυε.³⁸⁴ It is this 'hearing' that Nestor's libation immediately follows in the sequence of exchange. But the next day when Nestor and the household carry out the promised sacrifice this success will be even more explicitly underlined by the renewed presence of Athene to receive the offerings: ἦλθε δ' Ἀθήνη | ἱρῶν ἀντιώσα.³⁸⁵ Nestor's realisation of the presence of the goddess in association with Telemakhos is marked by the 'hearing' of Nestor's prayer. The goddess's return is a further reciprocal confirmation of the ritualised strategy by which Nestor has sought to extend the circle of epiphany to himself and his family.

This narrative sequence that follows upon the arrival of Dawn is vital for how this renewed presence of the goddess is framed. Presented successively are the arrival of Nestor's household in preparation for sacrifice, the arrival of the goddess Athene, the course of the sacrifice itself, and the seating of Telemakhos, newly bathed, at the side of Nestor.³⁸⁶ Of particular interest are the staged instructions of Nestor concerning the sacrificial preparations: Nestor rises from his bed and takes his place, sceptre in hand, near the ceremonial white stones situated before his doors, where Neleus had sat before him; a catalogue of sons gathers about him, with Telemakhos.³⁸⁷ In his ensuing speech, surrounded by

³⁸³ See esp. Kearns (1982); Murnaghan (1987), 56-90; Reece (1993), 181-187, 200-201. On the Suitors, see above, pp. 133-135; for bird-omens and the return of Odysseus, see above, p. 134 n. 345.

³⁸⁴ *Od.* 3.385. Muellner (1976), 22 n. 11, suggests that this phrase is neutral, i.e. 'hear' *not* 'hearken', even if there is only one partial exception, at *Il.* 16.249-250, to the fulfilment of prayers that have been so 'heard': he explicates this neutrality in terms of Mauss's 'formal pretense and social deception' in the context of obligated gift-exchange. Muellner's stress, e.g. 57, on prayer as an exchange more than a petition or promise, i.e. reciprocity, is now orthodox; see further J.-M. Bremer (1998a); Parker (1998).

³⁸⁵ *Od.* 3.435-436.

³⁸⁶ Dawn: *Od.* 3.404; preparations for sacrifice: 3.405-445; presence of Athene: 435-436, 438; sacrifice: 3.445-463; Telemakhos' bath and installation at the side of Nestor: 3.464-469. On the Pylian episode as a paradigm of (overzealous) hospitality, see Apthorp (1980); Reece (1993), 59-69; Dickson (1995), 181-185.

³⁸⁷ Nestor rises and sits: *Od.* 3.405-412. The stones, 406-409: κατ' ἄρ' ἔζετ' ἐπὶ ξεστοῖσι λίθοισιν, | οἳ οἱ ἔσαν προπάροιθε θυράων ὑψηλῶν | λευκοί, ἀποστίλβοντες ἀλείφατος· οἷσ' ἔπι μὲν πρὶν | Νηλεὺς ἔζεσκεν, θεόφιν μῆστωρ ἀτάλαντος. Nestor's sons gather: 412-416. On the stones, see Faraone (1992), 5-6, 14 n. 23; and S. West (ed.) (1988), on *Od.* 3.407, 408, for the uncertainty of which doors or gates might be meant: *megaron* or courtyard. For the character of the overall description, see Falkner ([1989] 1995), 35-36.

these trappings of authority, Nestor scripts the scene of sacrifice and feasting which is to follow with a series of imperatives.³⁸⁸ Nestor here operates at the literal centre of the relational circle that he has developed to structure the epiphany of Athene. By staging his action in this way, in this marked place, Nestor asserts his own authority to extend the relational circle of epiphany to encompass his entire household. The processional sequence that follows immediately upon Nestor's instructions is also of particular significance.³⁸⁹

- 430 ὥς ἔφαθ', οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ἐποίπνουν. ἦλθε μὲν ἄρ βοῦς
 ἐκ πεδίου, ἦλθον δὲ θοῆς παρὰ νηὸς εἵσης
 Τηλεμάχου ἔταροι μεγαλήτορος, ἦλθε δὲ χαλκεὺς
 ὅπλ' ἐν χερσὶν ἔχων χαλκήϊα, πείρατα τέχνης,
 ἄκμονά τε σφυρὰν τ' εὐποίητόν τε πυράγρην,
 435 οἷσιν τε χρυσὸν ἐργάζετο· ἦλθε δ' Ἀθήνη
 ἱρῶν ἀντιώσα. γέρων δ' ἱππηλάτα Νέστωρ
 χρυσὸν ἔδωχ'· ὁ δ' ἔπειτα βοὸς κέρασιν περίχευεν
 ἀσκήσας, ἵν' ἄγαλμα θεὰ κεχάροιτο ἰδοῦσα.

West has rightly drawn attention to the processional force of the repeated ἦλθε/ἦλθον in her commentary.³⁹⁰ Notably, Athene's arrival is in this respect just that of another participant in the procession; the basic orientation of the procession towards her is given more explicit expression in the purpose of the gilded horns of the sacrificial ox: ἵν' ἄγαλμα θεὰ κεχάροιτο ἰδοῦσα.³⁹¹ Athene's arrival constitutes a fourth after three previous arrivals, each of which is a direct consequence of Nestor's script: the ox, Telemakhos's companions, the smith.³⁹² The emergent logic of Athene's arrival is not far to find: within the frame of Nestor's ritualisation this arrival constitutes an reactualisation of the very grounds on which Nestor has declared that the whole offering is based:³⁹³

- καρπαλίμως μοι, τέκνα φίλα, κρήνατ' ἐέλωρ,
 ὄφρ' ἧ τοι πρῶτιστα θεῶν ἰλάσσομ' Ἀθήνην,
 420 ἧ μοι ἐναργῆς ἦλθε θεοῦ ἐς δαῖτα θάλειαν.

³⁸⁸ *Od.* 3.421, ἵτω; 424, ἀγέτω, λιπέτω; 425, κελέσθω; 427, μένετε, εἴπατε.

³⁸⁹ *Od.* 3.430-438.

³⁹⁰ S. West (ed.) (1988), on *Od.* 3.430ff.

³⁹¹ *Od.* 3.438.

³⁹² *Od.* 3.421-426.

³⁹³ *Od.* 3.418-420. Poseidon is the θεός of the θεοῦ δαῖτα here: see 3.4-9, 31-33, 331-336. For Nestor's piety on the beach, see S. West (ed.) (1988), on *Od.* 3.5ff. Note also Athene's action there, 3.36-62, when she made prayer and libation to Poseidon and 'fulfilled' it herself: 62, ὥς ἄρ' ἔπειτ' ἤρᾱτο καὶ αὐτὴ πάντα τελεύτα. Effectively, the ritualised action of Nestor and family towards Poseidon is diverted by Athene over the course of the two days towards herself, and the shift of the site of sacrifice from the beach to the palace of Nestor is significant in terms of this opposition; note Cook (1995), 128: 'Athene reigns within the city gates, Poseidon without them'.

The goddess's past arrival (ἦλθε) is, within the terms of this repetition, directly related to the goddess's present arrival (ἦλθε) within the ritualised frame that Nestor has set up to negotiate the fact and significance of Athene's presence. For West to comment on this arrival that 'Athena is present in person, but invisible' seems to beg the question.³⁹⁴ The dichotomy visible/invisible may not be the most useful criterion to bring to bear upon the presence of Athene at this point for two reasons.³⁹⁵ First, nothing is stated of the modality of Athene's presence at this point. An important Homeric point of comparison here must be the procession in *Iliad* 6 to the temple and image/person of Athene, a scene whose play with the possible ramifications of viewpoint in relation to divine presence and response I have discussed earlier.³⁹⁶ In both these Homeric scenes the processional frame is itself correlative with 'making present', whether the presence of the goddess goes unnoticed or not; such a correlation is manifest in other Greek religious contexts.³⁹⁷ Second, this entire sequence, within which Nestor has first realised the epiphany of the goddess in relation to Telemakhos and has then extended the epiphanic circle to encompass his own household, comprises an extended process recognising the 'presence' and favour of the goddess. As such, whether the goddess's presence is explicitly noted or not by the other ritual participants here, it is still the strategic basis of Nestor's entire ritualised performance, and not least of this sacrifice which Nestor himself has glossed as such: ἰλάσσομ' Ἀθήνην | ἥ μοι ἐναργής ἦλθε θεοῦ ἐς δᾶτα θάλειαν.³⁹⁸ Thus the processional elements of this ritual scene underline its presentifying purpose. What this day of sacrifice and feasting offers is a further structuration of 'epiphany' to match Nestor's earlier formulation of the goddess's presence in relation to Telemakhos and Odysseus.

In this way, the recognition of divine presence as 'epiphany' is exemplified in this lengthy sequence as a process of negotiation that serves to

³⁹⁴ S. West (ed.) (1988), on *Od.* 3.435-436.

³⁹⁵ Compare Vernant ([1986] 1991a), 43: 'From a divine perspective, the opposition visible/invisible is no longer entirely pertinent'.

³⁹⁶ *Il.* 6.286-312; see above, pp. 123-125.

³⁹⁷ See esp. Connor ([1987] 2000); Sinos (1993); Kavoulaki (1999). For such presence of gods in the ritualised frame of procession, the Parthenon frieze is a striking depiction: see Castriota (1992), 214-218; Neils (1996b); Price (1999), 30-33; Neils (2001), 61-66, and esp. 198-200. The Panathenaic procession which the frieze depicts is 'the supreme example ... of a society on display before itself', as it is put by Parker (1996), 91, but Parker omits that this society includes the gods. This Homeric scene in Pylos is a tantalising comparison, along with *Il.* 6.286-312; for a provocative discussion of the *Odyssey* and Athenian ritual, see Cook (1995), who does not discuss this scene; for the epic antecedents of the πέπλος in the Panathenaia, see Lefkowitz (1996), 80; Karanika (2001), 281, 285-287.

³⁹⁸ *Od.* 3.420.

structure the epiphany as two interconnecting interpretative circles. Within these circles the presence of Athene is shaped, managed, and evoked, and the significance of her presence realised in relational terms. Several overlapping narratives of past, present and future relations emerge as the driving forces of this process. In my earlier discussion of the long arm of Zeus, the sequence of appearances in *Iliad* 5 and the spectacular descent of Athene I underlined the extent to which an 'epiphany' is something to be negotiated between the play of divine presence across a range of possibilities and the perceptual capacities of mortals. Here I want to emphasise how Nestor's complex response to the bird-departure of Athene shows how such a negotiation might be managed productively in relation to the specific narrative contexts of Telemakhos's journey. For Telemakhos, this is very much a lesson in practical logic, in the practical mastery of the problems of epiphany.³⁹⁹ But it cannot be definitive or complete, and this lack is inscribed from the outset in the textual eddies of Athene's bird-departure.⁴⁰⁰ We cannot take Nestor's performance here as a privileged paradigm of 'how epiphany works', only as a particular enactment of relational logic applied to the problematic that divine epiphany constitutes. Processes of 'relating' or narrativising epiphany do not overcome the incompleteness of either the characters' or the audience's perception of divine presence. In the epiphanic departure of Athene in *Pylos* the mechanisms of her flux of form between Mentor and lammergeyer remain unresolvable in denominational terms, just as the long arm of Zeus fluctuated between presence and absence. These figures of divinity embrace their own indeterminacy. Yet precisely what this indeterminacy underlines is the supplementarity of epiphany. It is this potential for the generation of further narratives that Nestor harnesses when he realises the epiphany of Athene first in relation to Telemakhos and then in relation to himself and his household.

³⁹⁹ As such this is part of a lengthy series, begun already in Ithaka: see *Od.* 1.319-324, 420; 2.146-156, 260-297; 4.351-362, 363-425, 435-570, 4.654-656; 15.1-43, 160-182, 525-538; 16.177-212; 18.346-348, 407; 19.33-46, 22.205-240; 24.502-520. For practical mastery and the logic of practice, see Bourdieu (1977), 87-95, 118-120, 124; Bourdieu (1990); Bell (1992), 98, 107-108; also Kapferer (1997), 176, 'The rite does not develop from a logic so much as it generates it in its practical motion', and 325 n. 54.

⁴⁰⁰ This is Pucci's fundamental point; see above, p. 139. For an anthropological perspective, compare Kapferer (1997), 176: 'The practices embed the *doxa* of the rite, or the principles that underlie its direction. *Adura* can and do reflect, independently of the contexts of their performances, on the meaning and structure of their practice. But like human beings everywhere, they cannot verbalize the significance of all that they do. Indeed, it is impossible for me to transform into a text all that I saw and heard and experienced. Exorcists are selective in what they reveal in words, like anthropologists who textualize ethnographic material ... All this is obvious.'

What Nestor does here may appear, at first glance, to be simply reactive. But this is not accurate. The ritualised strategies that Nestor evokes are relational in a full sense, and the renewed presence of Athene is a direct consequence of this. While it might appear tempting within a more typologically oriented discussion to classify the first appearance of Athene separately from her second appearance, insofar as the first seems to be a spur to ritualised management and the second seems to be a consequence of Nestor's ritualised action, this would be misleading. In fact, the ritualised processes that Nestor puts into play evoke, *as if already in existence*, a circle of relations between Athene, Telemakhos, Odysseus, and Nestor and his family. This circularity is pervasive, and in the terms of the relational logic of these strategies there is no point where the circle can be said to have begun: at the moment that the relational claim is formulated, the world has already been rearticulated in its terms.⁴⁰¹ This is the particular power of successful ritual.⁴⁰² But however much the indeterminacy of divine presence is temporarily encompassed within such a relational circle, it is not resolved: epiphany is not 'ritualised' in this sense precisely because the problematic of divine presence remains even as strategies are put into play to structure it. We return to West's comment that 'Athena is present in person, but invisible' in the sacrificial procession at Pylos: this is to say more than can be said, both from the point of view of the participants about whose perception of the goddess the audience of the epic cannot be sure, even if the logic of the entire ritualised performance is oriented around the goddess's presence, and from the point of view of the audience of the epic, whose knowledge of the goddess's presence is assured by the authority of the narrator, but whose perceptions of the goddess herself are completely undetermined. But what audiences can do is to join with the participants and the goddess herself in admiring the gilded horns of the sacrificial ox—an ἄγαλμα for the goddess's pleasure, which in its delight might evoke a delightful response in the ongoing reciprocity of favour.⁴⁰³ The strategy of objectification that such an ἄγαλμα constitutes works in gratifying ways both for the participants and for the goddess herself.

⁴⁰¹ For this structuring of structure, compare Bell (1992), 140: 'the strategic production of expedient schemes that structure an environment in such a way that the environment appears to be the source of the schemes and their values.'

⁴⁰² Pervasive anxiety about correctness reflects this fundamental potential of ritualisation. On the 'sense of ritual' integral in such contexts, see Bell (1992), 80, 213. In the Greek context, see e.g. Parker (1996), 50-53, 152-153, 218-222, on the imbrication of ritual and civic propriety in Athens; Price (1999), 67-88, on control and crisis; Parker (1998), 114-118, on failures of χάρις.

⁴⁰³ See esp. Parker (1998), 108-109, on the vocabulary of χάρις.

The dealings between Diomedes and Athene in *Iliad* 5 provide a complementary instance to set alongside Nestor's relational strategies in *Odyssey* 3. Diomedes' initial prayer to Athene comes after the beginning of his *aristeia*, which Athene herself has set into motion at the beginning of *Iliad* 5.⁴⁰⁴ This prayer, framed in terms of Athene's previous presence, follows immediately upon Diomedes' wounding:⁴⁰⁵

- 115 δὴ τότε ἔπειτ' ἡρᾶτο βοὴν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης·
 " κλυθί μοι, αἰγιόχοιο Διὸς τέκος, Ἀτρυτώνη,
 εἴ ποτέ μοι καὶ πατρὶ φίλα φρονέουσα παρέστης
 δηΐῳ ἐν πολέμῳ, νῦν αὖτ' ἐμὲ φίλαι, Ἀθήνη·
 τόνδ' ἐγὼ μ' ἄνδρα ἐλεῖν καὶ ἐς ὄρμην ἔγχεος ἐλθεῖν,
 ὅς μ' ἔβαλε φθάμενος καὶ ἐπεύχεται, οὐδέ μ' ἐφθίον
 120 δηρὸν ἔτ' ὄψεσθαι λαμπρὸν φάος ἡελίοιο. "
 ὥς ἔφατ' εὐχόμενος· τοῦ δ' ἔκλυε Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη

Diomedes prays for the goddess's assistance, and the key terms of his prayer speak of relationship and presence: εἴ ποτέ μοι καὶ πατρὶ φίλα φρονέουσα παρέστης ... νῦν αὖτ' ἐμὲ φίλαι. This link between assistance and presence is underlined by Aubriot in a discussion of the language here, where past presence is made the basis for the present claim for assistance.⁴⁰⁶ The terms Diomedes uses are not a direct call for presence; contrast Odysseus in the games for Patroklos: κλυθί, θεά, ἀγαθή μοι ἐπίρροθος ἐλθέ ποδοῦν.⁴⁰⁷ But Diomedes' invocation of past presence and plea for divine 'friendship' is similar to that used by Odysseus elsewhere in a prayer to Athene: ἢ τέ μοι αἰεὶ ἰ ἐν πάντεσσι πόνοισι παρίστασαι ... ἰ ... νῦν αὖτε μάλιστα με φίλαι, Ἀθήνη.⁴⁰⁸ The particular nature of Diomedes' request in *Iliad* 5 is reinforced by the broader comparison that can be made between his prayer and its aftermath, and that made by Glaukos immediately after the death of Sarpedon which results in the healing of Glaukos by Apollo.⁴⁰⁹ Diomedes is not healed here as it turns out, but a more significant difference between these two contexts is the evocation of (past)

⁴⁰⁴ *Il.* 5.1-8. On this motif, see Krischer (1971), 24-27; Fenik (1968), 10.

⁴⁰⁵ *Il.* 5.114-121. Diomedes' wounding: 5.95-113. For the language used to stage prayer in Homer, see esp. Muellner (1976), 17-67. Aubriot (1992), 302-319, discusses ἀράομαι as an invocation of presence; but see also Pulleyn (1997), 75-76. For the content of Homeric prayers, see Beckmann (1932), 3-23; Müllder (1929); Müllder (1930); Keyssner (1932); and recently Lateiner (1997), 255-265.

⁴⁰⁶ Aubriot (1992), 307-309.

⁴⁰⁷ *Il.* 23.770. On ἐλθέ, see Pulleyn (1997), 136-137. For a selection of formulas 'audiendi, videndi, veniendi' in Homer and tragedy, see Ausfeld (1903), 516-517; cf. Keyssner (1932), 98-101.

⁴⁰⁸ *Il.* 10.278-280. Compare Telemakhos at *Od.* 2.262: κλυθί μοι, ὃ χθιζὸς θεὸς ἦλυθες; then at 2.267, Athene comes in the guise of Mentor.

⁴⁰⁹ *Il.* 16.508-531. See Fenik (1968), 21-22; Lateiner (1997), 257-258.

presence and the ensuing presence of the god.⁴¹⁰ This point will be reinforced by Pandaros a little later in *Iliad* 5, when Diomedes' desire to kill Pandaros comes closer to fulfilment. The boast that Pandaros had made earlier in wounding Diomedes will in this later scene be modified by the Trojan archer when Aineias prompts him to speculate on the evident connection with divinity manifested by Diomedes in his rampaging progress.⁴¹¹ In particular, Pandaros canvasses the possibilities either that Diomedes is in fact a god, or that a god stands by him:⁴¹²

σάφα δ' οὐκ οἶδ' εἰ θεός ἐστιν.
 εἰ δ' ὃ γ' ἀνὴρ ὄν φημι, δαίφρων Τυδέος υἱός,
 185 οὐχ ὃ γ' ἀνέυθε θεοῦ τάδε μαίνεται, ἀλλὰ τις ἄγχι
 ἔστηκεν ἄθανάτων, νεφέλῃσι ἐιλυμένος ὦμους

The terms that Pandaros uses here recall those used by Diomedes earlier in recalling the presence of Athene by Tydeus's side. This presence had been recalled earlier by Agamemnon in his abusive speech to Diomedes, and the paradigmatic nature of Athene's assistance to Tydeus within the larger story of Thebes recurs elsewhere.⁴¹³ The mobilisation of this motif by Diomedes himself and the ensuing presence of Athene underline the basic appropriateness of Pandaros's speculations.

But what I particularly want to stress in the present context is how Diomedes' claims for Athene's special assistance and her responses to Diomedes are articulated by a provocative telling and retelling of the relations between Athene, Diomedes' father Tydeus, and Diomedes himself. Such provocative comparison between Diomedes and his father was introduced by Agamemnon in *Iliad* 4, and Diomedes' aristeia is a response to this.⁴¹⁴ The motif is then reintroduced several times. Diomedes' own prayer takes it as the basis of his plea for assistance, and Athene restates it when she says that she has filled Diomedes with his father's might.⁴¹⁵ This stipulation by the goddess in one

⁴¹⁰ Fenik (1968), 21 n. 22, observes that Diomedes is not actually healed, but is right that this does not undermine 'the basic parallelism'.

⁴¹¹ Pandaros's boast: *Il.* 5.101-106, esp. 104-105, εἰ ἐτέον με ἰῶρσεν ἀναξ Διὸς υἱός. Aineias: 5.170-178, esp. 177-178: εἰ μή τις θεός ἐστι κοτεσσάμενος Τρώεσσιν, ἰερῶν μηνίσας· χαλεπή δὲ θεοῦ ἔπι μῆμις. Pandaros's response: 5.180-216.

⁴¹² *Il.* 5.183-186.

⁴¹³ *Il.* 4.370-400, esp. 390: τοίη οἱ ἐπίρροθος ἦεν Ἀθήνη. Athene raises it at *Il.* 5.800-813, esp. 808, τοίη οἱ ἐγὼν ἐπιτάρροθος ἦα. Diomedes raises it at *Il.* 10.284-294, esp. 290: ὅτε οἱ πρόφρασσα παρέστης. On the sequence, see now Alden (2000), 112-152, as a 'debate on the merits of divine patronage'.

⁴¹⁴ See Nagy ([1979] 1999), 162-163.

⁴¹⁵ *Il.* 5.116-117, 125-126: ἐν γάρ τοι στήθεσσι μένος πατρώϊον ἦκα ἰᾶτρομον, οἶον ἔχεσκε σακεσπάλος ἵπποτα Τυδεύς.

sense simply picks up the terms of Diomedes' prayer. But she also uses it as a challenge to Diomedes to emulate his father, in the same way that Agamemnon did. This challenge is picked up by the goddess later in *Iliad* 5, when she returns to the battlefield to spur the flagging Diomedes back into action.⁴¹⁶ What particularly emerges in this exchange is the degree to which Diomedes is being used by Athene as a tool to inflict humiliation on Aphrodite and Ares.⁴¹⁷ Alden is right to stress the relevance here of the exchange on the fate of θεομάχοι given by Dione in consolation to Aphrodite; perhaps Athene's assistance to Diomedes is not to be without profound cost? There are no immediate consequences within the narrative of *Iliad*, but it remains an undercurrent of immediate relevance to the thematic encounters between mortality and divinity that are staged in *Iliad* 5.⁴¹⁸ When Diomedes invokes an existing set of relations between himself, his father and Athene, then his prayer is effective for reasons similar to those which underline the success of Nestor in *Odyssey* 3. The ensuing presence and assistance of Athene is structured in similar, relational terms to those deployed by Nestor with greater ceremony. But the terms of Diomedes' relational strategy are used by others, notably Agamemnon and Athene, as a specific provocation. In this way the effectiveness of Diomedes' strategy comes full circle in Athene's own provocative take on the nature of the relation between Diomedes and his father which spurs Diomedes on with Athene at his side against Ares. Relational narratives can be told in more than one way, and for more than one purpose. The control that such ritualised strategies offer can be manipulated for their own ends by those who are encompassed within the relational circle. The apparent success of Diomedes' strategy here is (only?) a reflection of Athene's own intentions.

If reciprocity is the overt principle by which mortals continually assert themselves in their dealings with the gods, this is a superimposition upon an alternative negative relation which is much more disconcerting. What the larger narrative of Diomedes' exploits reinforces is the basic contingency of mortal strategies designed to overcome the disconcerting slide between divine presence and absence. On one level, by means of the ritualised strategies of prayer and sacrifice, and by the narratives that are generated in and around such ritualisation, the gods are drawn into an economy of reciprocity. Here the

⁴¹⁶ *Il.* 5.800-813.

⁴¹⁷ See Erbse (1961), 161-164; Alden (2000), 123.

⁴¹⁸ See Alden (2000), 151-152 and n. 83, for realisations of this potential narrative. But Alden ignores another narrative in which Diomedes is immortalised: see Nagy ([1979] 1999), 163-164, 174. On the broader theme, see above, pp. 108-111.

relation between gods and mortals is transformed into one whose terms can be embraced and temporarily transcended in relationships of mutual delight, as the example of Nestor demonstrates. But this scenario is always and everywhere subverted by the sheer inequality of the non-relation that lies beneath it.⁴¹⁹ I discussed earlier how the relation between divinity and humanity in *Iliad* 5 may be understood as a relation which denies that there is a relation at all: the gods precede, supercede and exceed mortals. The stark nature of this non-relation is as radically destructive of humanity's claims as it is affirmative of the gods themselves.



Epiphany's ends

Authority and legitimacy are always implicated in and around the interface between mortals and gods. There are several dynamics in play. One lies in the exercise of divine power and force, for which Zeus's thunderbolt is the inevitable archetype with its capacity for a bursting-asunder that radically transforms the ground of existence: for mortals this means immortality or death, for immortals this means a form of the 'binding' that is the only way to counteract the basic potential of the gods.⁴²⁰ This mode of hierarchical power relations is unashamedly authoritarian, and deploys an authority that does not justify itself, but instead appeals to its previous displays of strength as challenge and threat: Zeus's rule of Olympus is paradigmatic in its recurrent return to this threat of physical superiority.⁴²¹ A second dynamic lies in the ethically framed relations of parentage and reciprocity that are manifested in the Homeric poems. Gods are fathers and mothers of mortal heroes, and the *Iliad* and

⁴¹⁹ For a constitutive link between the delight of *χάρης* and its unpredictability, see Lynn-George (1996), 8-9.

⁴²⁰ Mortals: see esp. Nagy (1990a), 139-140. For Zeus's thunderbolt and the 'binding' of a divine rival, note Typhon at *Il.* 2.781-783, *Hes. Theog.* 853-868. On the binding of gods in myth and ritual, see D. T. Steiner (2001), 160-168.

⁴²¹ See esp. *Il.* 1.560-570, 8.5-27, 15.18-24. On the place of theogonic stories in *Il.* and *Od.*, see Slatkin (1991), 14.

Odyssey are structured by such relationships.⁴²² Gods also express ethical ties to mortals whose practices of honouring the gods bind them in relationships of reciprocal commitment.⁴²³ The relation of parent and child is a recurrent Iliadic image of this care among gods, men and animals.⁴²⁴ The legitimation of action in this way is founded upon assertions of what is valued in the world. A third dynamic is found in the twin tropes of fate and justice. Theodicy is flagged in its opening scenes as a particular concern of the *Odyssey*, in the same way that the plan of Zeus is highlighted as a programmatic strategy at the outset of the *Iliad*.⁴²⁵ These tropes are complicit with fate even as they open up the space of the narrative itself. At points of contact between mortals and immortals throughout the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* these dynamics of authority and legitimacy are woven into the texture of the narrative, not as univocal claims, but as competing perspectives on the action. Here's comment to Zeus is apposite: ἔρδ' ἀτὰρ οὐ τοι πάντες ἐπαινέομεν θεοὶ ἄλλοι.⁴²⁶ The ultimate rationale here lies in the maintenance of order—but a *particular* order, in which the structure of this narrative and this cosmology mutually cohere.

Nowhere are these dynamics more important for the narratives qua narratives than at the ends of each epic, with our twin desires for the 'ending' and an understanding of the significance of the events in which we have participated as audiences.⁴²⁷ Consider first the end of the *Odyssey*. Much has been written on the place of *Odyssey* 24 in the larger structures of the epic; I will not rehearse this material, but I do want to consider the ramifications of the final moments of the epic as closing frame.⁴²⁸ In certain respects this scene of

⁴²² Paradigmatic of motherhood is Thetis's lament for Akhilleus, *Il.* 24.83-88; see Slatkin (1991), 85. Paradigmatic of fatherhood is Zeus's reaction to the death of Sarpedon, *Il.* 16.431-461, 567-568, 666-583; see Nagy (1990a), 131-142, for Sarpedon's posthumous treatment. For the relation of Poseidon and Polyphemus and Poseidon's wrath at *Od.* 1.19-21, 1.68-79, 9.526-536, see esp. Cook (1995), 49-56, 96, 123-127; but also Clay (1983), 44-47, 51-52.

⁴²³ Representative are Hektor, *Il.* 24.33-38, and Odysseus, *Od.* 1.60-61; see esp. Lynn-George (1996), 9.

⁴²⁴ See Mills (2000).

⁴²⁵ Plan of Zeus: *Il.* 1.5; see above, p. 90 nn. 172-173, p. 108 n. 235. Theodicy: *Od.* 1.28-79; see esp. Clay (1983), 213-239.

⁴²⁶ *Il.* 16.443. On divine maintenance of the status quo, see above, p. 108 n.235. This point is frequently missed, as e.g. Schein (1984), 50: 'such sufferings and battles of the gods are a thing of the past, which no longer occur, though they are occasionally recalled'.

⁴²⁷ For the difference between closure of expectations and closure of understanding—Barthes' proairetic and hermeneutic codes—see Abbott (2002), 53-60. Of course, such questions of structure and meaning are mutually implicating, 'living, as we do, in the middle': Le Guin (1981), 195.

⁴²⁸ Scholarly support for *Od.* 24 is now relatively widespread: for a representative view, see Heubeck (ed.) (1991), 353-355 and on *Od.* 23.297, 24.1-204, 205-412, 413-548; but see S.

divinely inspired combat between the tri-generational band of warriors and the families of the Ithakan Suitors functions as a highly appropriate closing tableau that reinscribes the themes of patriarchy that run through the *Odyssey* in a startling image of inter-generational solidarity.⁴²⁹ But the sudden peace with which the *Odyssey* ends is imposed at an arbitrary point: resolution in this ending comes from without, with the decisive interventions of Athene and Zeus to halt fighting and impose peace.

This divine control over the ending of the *Odyssey* is articulated twice, first in divine council and then in the action itself.⁴³⁰ It is this action that I want to consider briefly, especially how it forecloses on the potential for other narratives.⁴³¹ In the first place, the solidarity of Odysseus, Laertes and Telemakhos does not have a direct outcome in battle with the Suitors' families. Despite Athene's action in urging Laertes on, his initial killing with the goddess's assistance actually marks the ending of battle. When Odysseus and Telemakhos both leap forward and join in the battle, the goddess intervenes:⁴³²

ἐν δ' ἔπεσον προμάχοις Ὀδυσσεὺς καὶ φαίδιμος υἱός,
τύπτον δὲ ξίφεσιν τε καὶ ἔγχεσιν ἀμφιγύοισι.
καὶ νύ κε δὴ πάντας ὄλεσαν καὶ ἔθηκαν ἀνόστους,
εἰ μὴ Ἀθηναίη, κόρυη Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο,
530 ἦῤυσεν φωνῇ, κατὰ δ' ἔσχεθε λαὸν ἅπαντα·
" ἴσχεσθε πτολέμου, Ἰθακήσιοι, ἀργαλέοιο,
ὥς κεν ἀναιμωτὶ γε διακρινθῆτε τάχιστα. "

The goddess's instruction is to halt: ἴσχεσθε. Again, when Odysseus is about to take advantage of the literal disarmament that Athene's voice has brought about, Zeus marks this point of ending with a thunderbolt and Athene's verbal instructions spell out the unequivocal message that this comprises:⁴³³

West (1989); Seaford (1994), 38-42; R. B. Rutherford (1996), 74-77; Jones (1997), 38-41; Lowe (2000), 151: 'something seems to have gone awry in the narrative execution'. For a relevant provocation on reading for structure, see Goldhill (1988), 1-9. For the 'penumbra of secondariness' that still surrounds *Od.* 24, see Henderson (1997), 87 n. 3.

⁴²⁹ Note esp. Laertes, *Od.* 24.514-515: τίς νύ μοι ἡμέρη ἦδε, θεοὶ φίλοι; ἦ μάλα χαίρω· ἢ υἱός θ' υἱωνός τ' ἀρετῆς πέρι δῆριν ἔχουσι; cf. Goldhill (1991), 20-21. On the scene, see Thalmann (1998), 221-223; Felson (1999).

⁴³⁰ *Od.* 24.472-488, 502-548.

⁴³¹ The prophecy of Teiresias, *Od.* 11.100-137, is the most prominent of these: see Hansen (1977); Peradotto (1985) (cf. Peradotto (1990), 60-82); Pucci (1987), 148-150; Falkner ([1989] 1995), 50-51; Ford (1992), 161-163. For the narrative function of the 'prophetic future' in the *Odyssey*, but omitting to consider Teiresias, see Todorov ([1971] 1977), 63-65.

⁴³² *Od.* 24.526-532.

⁴³³ *Od.* 24.537-544. Compare the thunderbolt that halts Diomedes in *Il.* 8.130-144; Nestor correctly interprets: ἦ πολὺν φέρτερός ἐστι. This is a conversation 'unlike any other': Fenik (1968), 222; cf. Kirk (ed.) (1990), on 8.139-144.

σμερδαλέον δ' ἐβόησε πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,
 οἷμῃσεν δὲ ἀλεῖς ὥς τ' αἰετὸς ὑψιπετής.
 καὶ τότε δὴ Κρονίδης ἀφίει ψολόεντα κεραυνόν,
 540 κὰδ δ' ἔπεσε πρόσθε γλαυκῶπιδος ὀβριμοπάτρης.
 δὴ τότε Ὀδυσσῆα προσέφη γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη·
 " διογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ,
 ἴσχεο, παῦε δὲ νείκος ὁμοίου πολέμοιο,
 μή πῶς τοι Κρονίδης κεχολώσεται εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς. "

From amid the smoke of the thunderbolt, Athene addresses Odysseus with a double naming that enacts once again his multiple narratives and his particular renown.⁴³⁴ But the goddess stages the hero here only to call a halt: ἴσχεο, παῦε. The alternative is the anger of Zeus, and this threat constitutes a self-sufficient authority with which to cut short this story of familial revenge.

More than this, the texture of this ending raises the possibility of another kind of narrative again. The language of Laertes' killing of Eupheithes is that of Iliadic battle:⁴³⁵

520 ὥς φάτο, καὶ ῥ' ἔμπνευσε μένος μέγα Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη.
 εὐξάμενος δ' ἄρ' ἔπειτα Διὸς κούρηι μέγαλοιο,
 αἶψα μάλ' ἀμπεπαλὼν προΐει δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος
 καὶ βάλεν Εὐπείθεα κόρυθος διὰ χαλκοπαρήϊου.
 ἦ δ' οὐκ ἔγχος ἔρυτο, διαπρὸ δὲ εἷσατο χαλκός·
 525 δούπησεν δὲ πεσών, ἀράβησε δὲ τεύχε' ἐπ' αὐτῷ.

The clatter of Eupheithes' arms about him marks out his death a little differently again from the earlier deaths of his fellow-Suitors.⁴³⁶ At this point where the end of this *Odyssey* threatens to become an Iliadic *Ithakiaka*, in which the status of Odysseus's own homecoming narrative will be at stake, Athene and Zeus intervene: παῦε δὲ νείκος ὁμοίου πολέμοιο.⁴³⁷ It is ostensibly to avoid the

⁴³⁴ Smoke: see Erbse (1972), 191, on ψολόεντα κεραυνόν. Compare *Il.* 8.133-136, where the effect of the ἀργῆτα κεραυνόν is more explicit, esp. 135: δεινὴ δὲ φλόξ ὤρτο θεείου καιομένοιο. On naming and referentiality, see esp. Bakker (1997), 156-163; also Dickson (1995), 20-25, for helpful comments building on Foley's traditional referentiality to describe the evocation of absent narratives. For the tension in staging Odysseus as πολύτλας then πολυμήχανος at *Od.* 24.537, 542, see Peradotto (1990), 168-169.

⁴³⁵ *Od.* 24.520-525.

⁴³⁶ *Od.* 24.525: ἀράβησε δὲ τεύχε' ἐπ' αὐτῷ. The clattering of arms is especially frequent early in *Il.* (4.504, 5.42, 5.58, 5.294, 5.540, 8.260, 13.187, 17.50, 17.311) but only here in *Od.* For the Iliadic language in *Od.* 24, see Heubeck (ed.) (1991), on 24.516-527; in this passage, see Falkner ([1989] 1995), 46. In the battle earlier against the Suitors, note esp. *Od.* 22.241-296, before Athene wields the aegis at 22.297-309; see the detailed analysis of Pucci (1987), 128-138; also Lowe (2000), 144: 'Even the studiedly Iliadic combat in XXII gives more weight to strategic advantage than is ever the case in the *Iliad*.'

⁴³⁷ *Od.* 24.543. For this foreclosure of Eupheithes' apparently persuasive alternative version of Odysseus's story, note *Od.* 24.426-428 and see Haubold (2000), 107-108.

consequences of strife between the two groups that Athene intervenes, but a subtext here is the economy of honour and κλέος which both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* take as a central concern in their different ways and in which strife of a different sort has its place: ἦ μάλα χαίρω· ἰ υἷός θ' υἱωνός τ' ἀρετῆς πέρι δῆριν ἔχουσι.⁴³⁸ Laertes has his moment of Iliadic aristeia, and the son and grandson leap forward to stake their own claims in the strife of battle.⁴³⁹ The *Iliad* takes a sorrowful view of the viability of father-son relations in the face of the exigencies of war and the battlefield; by contrast, the dynamics of this Odyssean father-son-grandfather ending are less bleak—so long as this Iliadic moment remains momentary?⁴⁴⁰ The *Iliad* returns again and again to the theme of intergenerational competition, notably in figures like Diomedes as I have discussed, but there is no place for such competition in this Odyssean ending, just as Odysseus had earlier suppressed Telemakhos's attempt to string the bow.⁴⁴¹

The final image of the *Odyssey* is a reiteration of the presence of Athene in the guise of Mentor once again as she imposes the ὅρκια between the warring parties that Zeus has earlier foreshadowed.⁴⁴² Athene has already been introduced as Mentor. Odysseus and Laertes seem to recognise her—we all imagine that we know what Mentor means by now.⁴⁴³ She brings about a disarmament by the power of her voice alone. And then comes this final reiteration of Athene's guise amidst the instauration of peace. Her guise here

⁴³⁸ Thus Laertes, *Od.* 24.514-515. But the *Odyssey* is Odysseus's poem, and he is 'best of the Achaeans': see Nagy ([1979] 1999), 26-41. The *Odyssey* does play at 'Iliadic' strife elsewhere: compare the νεῖκος of Odysseus and Akhilleus at *Od.* 8.72-82 that refigures the ἔρις of Akhilleus and Agamemnon at *Il.* 1.6-8, with Nagy ([1979] 1999), 22-23, 130-131.

⁴³⁹ See Thalmann (1998), 222: 'It is a measure of how carefully the idealizing strategy must avoid any possibility of conflict between Odysseus and Telemakhos that the grandfather is the only one of the three given an individual exploit'.

⁴⁴⁰ On the Iliadic father, see esp. Lynn-George (1988), 241-250. On the topic of intergenerational relations in both epics, see esp. Crotty (1994), 24-41; Thalmann (1998), 206-223; Felson (1999); Felson (2002). Strauss (1993), considers solidarity and conflict in Athens, with its Homeric antecedents. Note also Lowe (2000), 151: 'This final settlement in both cases movingly juxtaposes the hero's lost reunion with his father (allowed in the *Odyssey*, pointed denied in the *Iliad* and surrogated instead through Priam) with the loss felt by the father(s) of his slain enemies.'

⁴⁴¹ Diomedes: Agamenon 'blames' him, νεῖκεσεν, by comparison with Tydeus, *Il.* 4.368; see esp. Nagy ([1979] 1999), 161-162. Bow: *Od.* 21.128-129; see Felson (1994), 84-86, with an emphasis on Telemakhos's complicity; Thalmann (1998), 207-209, 217-219, disputes aspects of Felson's positive spin on this moment of tension.

⁴⁴² Note *Od.* 24.482-485, with Heubeck (ed.) (1991), on 24.482-485: 'a slight inconcinnity ... surely deliberately introduced to emphasize the decisive role of the gods in the establishment of the new order'.

⁴⁴³ Compare S. West (1989), 130: 'we have a sense of her divinity being clear despite her disguise'.

seems perfunctory, a reflex of her earlier action throughout the epic, yet it is insisted upon. Her presence seems hardly posed as a problem, especially since the goddess is vital to the action precisely qua goddess. Along with the univocal sign of Zeus's thunderbolt few questions remain for the audience about the gods' instrumentality in the ending. So why the reiteration of the goddess as Mentor? From one perspective, the repetition normalises the arbitrariness of the end, by recalling the past presence and actions of Athene in this guise once more.⁴⁴⁴ From another, the abruptness of this ending with the goddess compliments the sudden and corresponding absence of narrative(s) that the actions of Zeus and Athene serve to bring about: the repetition emphasises the arbitrary nature of the end. These perspectives can be taken together: the iterability of Athene as Mentor can be read a sign of both order and disorder, and as such it replays divine presence as a site of productive disruption.

Audiences of the epic are in a narrative bind. On the one hand, in this reiterative 'ending' we are challenged to interpret, and thus narrativise, the end in accordance with the context as we have it. But, on the other hand, we have seen how certain narratives have been foreclosed through the decisive intervention of Athene and Zeus. One prominent answer to the challenge set by the end of the *Odyssey* narrates the ending as the institution of a new reign of divinely located justice to replace the savagery of blood-revenge.⁴⁴⁵ The *Odyssey* becomes a narrative 'of the greatest importance in the history of ideas': ἴσχεσθε πολέμου ... ἢ ὥς κεν ἀναιμωτί γε διακρινθῇτε τάχιστα.⁴⁴⁶ In place of the endless generation of stories through conflict, we are to have a means of ending narrative relatively bloodlessly.⁴⁴⁷ But to read in this way amounts to complicity on our part in the arbitrariness of the ending from without, since the motivation for this great leap forward is entirely framed in terms of Zeus and Athene, who shut down the potential for an *Ithakiaka* and impose a

⁴⁴⁴ As do e.g. Wender (1978), 67; Thalmann (1984), 52; Heubeck (ed.) (1991), on 24.548.

⁴⁴⁵ For the end as a 'a new moral order', see e.g. Heubeck (ed.) (1991), on 24.413-548. But see also Clay (1983), 213-246, who offers a sophisticated view of the *Odyssey*'s 'double theodicy'.

⁴⁴⁶ *Od.* 24.531-532. For the quotation, see Heubeck (ed.) (1991), on 24.482-485. Note the suggestive similarity of language here and 24.543—διακρινθῇτε τάχιστα ... νείκος ὁμοίου πολέμοιο—with what Odysseus had said to Penelope about the Trojans, 18.263-264: οἳ τε τάχιστα ἔκριναν μέγα νείκος ὁμοίου πολέμοιο. But the context makes a great difference.

⁴⁴⁷ At least: ink replaces blood in the battle over the *Odyssey*'s end. On the πέρας or τέλος of the *Odyssey*, see esp. Erbse (1972), 166-177; Moulton (1974), 153-157; Heubeck (ed.) (1991), on *Od.* 23.297.

settlement.⁴⁴⁸ This is no mortal settlement, but a one-sided arbitration predicated upon the authority of a transcendent force, for all the picture that Zeus represents of wealth and peace:⁴⁴⁹

ἐπεὶ δὴ μνηστῆρας ἐτίσατο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,
 ὅρκια πιστὰ ταμόντες ὁ μὲν βασιλευέτω αἰεὶ,
 ἡμεῖς δ' αὖ παίδων τε κασιγνήτων τε φόνοιο
 485 ἔκκλησιν θέωμεν· τοῖ δ' ἀλλήλους φιλέοντων
 ὥς τὸ πάρος, πλοῦτος δὲ καὶ εἰρήνῃ ἅλις ἔστω.

The families of the Suitors will not so much 'forgo revenge', as Heubeck puts it, but more simply 'forget' through the agency of Zeus and Athene: φόνοιο ἔκκλησιν θέωμεν.⁴⁵⁰ Things will be 'as before'. The authority of force is crucial here: we, like Phemius, will participate in a *particular* narrative as virtual co-conspirators in its structuring of the world.⁴⁵¹ But what is the alternative? A refusal to participate as audience in the interpretative responses—the adaptive narratives—that will forge the significance of this ending? Or an Iliadic narrative that must end not in return but in death?⁴⁵² Or some other narrative altogether?⁴⁵³ This coupling of narrative logic and illogic is figured in the puzzling yet perfunctory presence of the goddess at the very end of the *Odyssey*. The iterated presence of Athene as Mentor is the location of the authority of the end. But it is also the sign of an imposition from without, the marker of an authority of force upon whose ability to 'end' the actual ending rests.

In this respect, the ending of the *Iliad* contrasts with *Odyssey* 24.⁴⁵⁴ Where the end of the *Odyssey* stages a foreclosure of narrative, the ending of the *Iliad* is

⁴⁴⁸ This framing has been recognised, if only to be domesticated thus, as a *dea ex machina*: see Wender (1978), 64, for various versions.

⁴⁴⁹ *Od.* 24.482-486.

⁴⁵⁰ Heubeck (ed.) (1991), on 24.482-485.

⁴⁵¹ Phemius pleads for his life at *Od.* 22.344-355; note esp. 348-349: ἔοικα δέ τοι παραείδειν | ὥς τε θεῶν. See Pucci (1987), 228-235, esp. 230: 'This promise seems at any rate to be the fictional event from which the song of the *Odyssey* emerges as the version that triumphs over and silences all the others'. Compare S. West (1989), 132-134, for a brief provocation on Peisistratean politics and the foreclosure of narrative in *Od.* 24. On Peisistratos and Homer, see esp. Jensen (1980), 128-171. More broadly, for the seductive dangers of narrative and beguilement, see Goldhill (1993), 142-144; and esp. Thalmann (1998), 272-305, who builds on the characterisation of the *Odyssey* as a relatively 'closed' text developed by Doherty (1995).

⁴⁵² See esp. Pucci (1987), 127-142.

⁴⁵³ For a belated narrative that does it differently, and does not stop even with Odysseus's death, see the *Telegony* by Eugammon of Cyrene: Allen (ed.) (1912), 109.5-27. See Hansen (1977); Peradotto (1985), 443-444; S. West (1989), 130-132.

⁴⁵⁴ Conversely, on the links between *Iliad* 24 and the *Odyssey* as a whole, see R. B. Rutherford (1991-1993), 45-46; N. J. Richardson (ed.) (1993), 21-24. Compare Seaford

worked out through the recollection and generation of narratives in and through the ritualised texture of *Iliad* 24.⁴⁵⁵ The connections between narrative and ritualisation that I have stressed above in relation to the disconcerting presence and absence of the gods are realised here in an emphatic form for a different purpose: narrativisation and ritualisation offer strategies of control in the face of profound loss and grief. In particular, the central moments of encounter and ritual supplicancy between Akhilleus and Priamos are structured by recollection and narrative. Priamos's first words to Akhilleus are an evocation: *μνήσαι πατρός σοῖο*.⁴⁵⁶ Akhilleus responds initially in silence and tears, as the two of them recall those they have lost; but then Akhilleus responds with a story about the jars of Zeus and his father Peleus; later he tells of Niobe.⁴⁵⁷ This Niobe narrative ostensibly moves the story towards its end when Akhilleus and Priamos seal their temporary reconciliation with a meal, but it also offers a paradigmatic narrative that points to the lasting profundity of loss. As Lynn-George has emphasised, this is a narrative consolation that is in fact 'a recognition of the inconsolable' insofar as it narrates the indefinite continuance of mourning by the stone Niobe who broods on her sorrows yet.⁴⁵⁸ A complex of ritualisation and narrative concludes the funereal finale of *Iliad* 24 with the successive laments of Andromakhe, Hekabe and Helene, and the dawn narrative of Hektor's burial.⁴⁵⁹ Even as the *Iliad* itself ends, as Taplin has observed, the posting of lookouts in these final lines implicitly foreshadows

(1994), 154, on the importance of these ends: 'it is no accident that the process of development in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* is detectable in particular in different ways of *ending* the narrative'.

⁴⁵⁵ The language of recollection recurs throughout: 24.4, 9, 129, 167, 216, 428, 486, 504, 509, 601, 602, 613, 745; see esp. Lynn-George (1996), 15. For *μνησκω* as a key verb in epic narration, e.g. *Il.* 2.492, see Nagy ([1979] 1999), 17; Nagy (1990b), 58-59.

⁴⁵⁶ *Il.* 24.486; cf. 504.

⁴⁵⁷ *Il.* 24.527-551, 599-620; note 601 *μνησώμεθα*, 602 *ἐμνήσατο*, 613 *μνήσατ'*. On Niobe and the disputed lines 614-617, see esp. Lynn-George (1988), 250-252; Seaford (1994), 174-175; Lynn-George (1996), 15-16. For various perspectives on the 'invention' of the paradigm, see Kakridis (1949), 96-105; Willcock (1964), 141-142; Braswell (1971); Willcock (1977); Macleod (ed.) (1982), on 24.596-620; Alden (2000), 21-22.

⁴⁵⁸ Lynn-George (1988), 250; see also Seaford (1994), 175: 'Niobe represents precisely the impossibility of a complete return from the liminality of death-like sorrow'. The assimilation of the situation to the paradigm is particularly pointed in Niobe's digestive 'brooding', *Il.* 24.617 *πέσσει*, a metaphor from the meal: see Lynn-George (1988), 151; Lynn-George (1996), 16. Compare Apollo on Akhilleus at 4.513: *ἐπὶ νηυσὶ χόλον θυμαλγέα πέσσει*.

⁴⁵⁹ *Il.* 24.719-804. Segal (1971), 71, sees the funeral as 'the natural close to a poem which has dwelt on the exposure and violation of the corpse'; perhaps 'appropriate' would be a better word than 'natural', by which substitution to stress that the ritualised practice of the funeral is a means to achieve an end to the anti-ritual that the mutilation constitutes; see Redfield ([1975] 1994), 167-186, on funeral and antifuneral.

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the end of the truce and the resumption of the larger story of Troy.⁴⁶⁰ Prefacing the entire book is the sudden resurgence of another narrative, neglected elsewhere in the *Iliad*, that suddenly now serves as a basic point of orientation for the gods themselves in their debate over the body of Hektor; this is the Judgement of Paris, itself an 'outgrowth' of the story of Peleus and Thetis which also surfaces here with all its uneasy connotations.⁴⁶¹ In this way, the narratives that are told in *Iliad* 24 themselves point beyond their immediate contexts towards the persistent background and lasting consequences of the events that the *Iliad* depicts.

Now the narrative complex of *Iliad* 24 is intensely familiar.⁴⁶² I want to focus in particular on how both the presence and the *absence* of the gods play fundamental parts in the generation of authority and legitimation at the end of the *Iliad*. If the end of the *Odyssey* is paradigmatic for how the end can be imposed arbitrarily through the active presence of the gods, the *Iliad* complicates this picture by exploring how the displacement of the gods at a point of intense encounter between mortals generates a legitimacy that the authority of power alone cannot quite achieve. In this respect the encounter between Akhilleus and Priamos works itself out in terms that are highly significant for my consideration of the play of presence and perception in the interface between gods and mortals. This encounter is a kind of negative epiphany, in which Akhilleus and Priamos seem to achieve a strange *mutuality* of otherness that could never quite be possible in an encounter between mortals and gods. But, of course, the active presence of the gods remains a fundamental boundary condition for the very possibility of this encounter. It is in this curious interweaving of divine and mortal action that much of the significance of the end of the *Iliad* lies. Closer attention to the play of the presence and absence of the gods shows the fundamental roles that these

⁴⁶⁰ Taplin (1992), 283: 'The Trojans look out from the eleventh day in anticipation of the twelfth.'

⁴⁶¹ Judgement of Paris: *Il.* 24.24-30; for a survey of a passage contested since antiquity, see N. J. Richardson (ed.) (1993), on 24.23-30; but also Reinhardt ([1960] 1997a); Stinton ([1965] 1990); Davies (1981); Taplin (1992), 261-262; Jones (1997), 18-20. For this story as an 'outgrowth' of the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, see Nagy ([1979] 1999), 62. Peleus and Thetis: 24.59-63; see esp. Slatkin (1991), 53-84, and, on the narrative allusiveness of these lines, Scodel (1977).

⁴⁶² See recently Macleod (ed.) (1982), 8-35; Lynn-George (1988), 230-276; Taplin (1992), 260-284; Crotty (1994), esp. 3-23; Lynn-George (1996); Kim (2000), 9-34, 130-151. Note also the debate on ethical practices in C. Gill, Postlethwaite and Seaford (edd.) (1998) between Zanker (1998), who builds on Zanker (1994), 127-154; Postlethwaite (1998); and C. Gill (1998), 312-313. There is no longer a need to defend the place of *Il.* 24 in the *Iliad*: see Beck (1964); Deichgräber (1972); Macleod (ed.) (1982), 8-35; Edwards (1987), 301-303.

epiphanic moments of productive disruption fulfill, both in achieving an end and in provoking the production of narratives through which to explore the significance of this end.

In the first place, the presence of the authoritative word of Zeus operates as an index of his effective power to prescribe an end to Hektor's story that will somehow satisfy the competing allegiances that run through the *Iliad*. Reciprocity and its neglect, among both gods and mortals, is the theme around which the opening scenes of *Iliad* 24 revolve. In his unending defilement of Hektor's body in honour of Patroklos Akhilleus has 'destroyed pity' and has no shame; the honour that Hektor has done the gods demands recompense; the ties of birth and nurture demand due respect.⁴⁶³ Zeus adjudicates that these ties of reciprocity are not to constitute a zero-sum game: οὐ μὲν γὰρ τιμή γε μί' ἔσσεται.⁴⁶⁴ The god's next step is decisive as he moves to deploy his effective word, πυκινὸν ἔπος, which, as Lynn-George has shown, structures the narrative of the end of the *Iliad* as it is passed on to both Akhilleus and Priamos.⁴⁶⁵ This word achieves a double resolution of the conflicting ties of divine parental care and reciprocal action between mortals and gods. This complex prefigures the reciprocal exchange that will later take place when Priamos and Akhilleus use father-son relations as the mode through which to structure their respective participation in ritualised supplication. An important aspect of this mirroring of resolution on both divine and human levels is that it underlines how Zeus's adjudication and deployment of his word makes a judgement on the ending of the *Iliad*, with all the consequences that this brings for how authority and legitimacy will play out. The story of Troy itself has an 'end', but this is not to be the end of the *Iliad* as such, and what is evoked instead are paradoxical relations of care between mortals and gods. Compare Zeus's words to Poseidon in the divine council at the beginning of *Iliad* 20: μέλουσί μοι ὀλλύμενοί περ.⁴⁶⁶ An alternative perspective is offered by Akhilleus later in *Iliad* 24: αὐτοὶ δέ τ'

⁴⁶³ Akhilleus's actions: *Il.* 24.3-18. See esp. Redfield ([1975] 1994), 203; Lynn-George (1988), 230. Apollo on Akhilleus: *Il.* 24.44-45, ὥς Ἀχιλλεύς ἔλεον μὲν ἀπώλεσεν, οὐδέ οἱ αἰδώς ἰγίνεται; cf. Kim (2000), 12, 32. Compare Hekabe on Akhilleus at 24.207-208, with Segal (1971), 58-59, 61. Reciprocal care for Hektor: 24.33-35, 66-70. Hera on the ties of birth: 24.56-64. On the significance of the scene: e.g. Taplin (1992), 262.

⁴⁶⁴ *Il.* 24.66.

⁴⁶⁵ Zeus's word: *Il.* 24.75. Iris brings it to Priamos: 24.159-188. Thetis brings it to Akhilleus: 24.121-140. For 'the word of the father' in the structure of *Iliad* 24, see esp. Lynn-George (1988), 231-233. For the semantics of πυκινός, see esp. Lynn-George (1988), 232; Martin (1989), 35-36.

⁴⁶⁶ *Il.* 20.21; but note Zeus's continuation, 22-23: ἀλλ' ἦτοι μὲν ἐγὼ μενέω πτυχὶ Οὐλύμποιο ἡμενος, ἔνθ' ὀρώων φρένα τέρψομαι. For such divine 'enjoyment', see Burkert ([1960] 1997), 258: 'an expression of a dreadful, uncanny superiority'.

ἀκηδέες εἰσίν.⁴⁶⁷ A further perspective is given expression in the context of the battle between the gods in *Iliad* 21, when Apollo refuses to fight Poseidon for the sake of mortals, whose lives are like leaves in their flourishing and dying.⁴⁶⁸ But why then are they there at Troy at all? Apollo turns away and remains silent in the face of Artemis' abuse.⁴⁶⁹ Yet shortly afterwards he is to be found defending Troy itself, taking care that the wall does not fall on that day ὑπὲρ μόρον, 'contrary to fate':⁴⁷⁰

μέμβλετο γάρ οἱ τεῖχος ἐϋδμήτοιο πόλης,
μὴ Δαναοὶ πέρσειαν ὑπὲρ μόρον ἥματι κείνῳι.

This is 'care' for the end of Troy, for an appropriate end of Troy, and it functions, like all such avoidances of what is ὑπὲρ μόρον, just as much a trope of narrative control as an expression of the gods' intense involvement in the fate of Troy.⁴⁷¹ Against the backdrop of these varying reflections on the gods' own participation in the Iliadic narrative, the forms of care for Hektor and for Akhilleus that Zeus expresses in his adjudication gain a particular poignancy.⁴⁷² Conflict between these mortal endings and divine endlessness becomes acute in these concluding stages of the Iliadic narrative. The presence of Zeus's effective word enacts a particular response to this challenge of endings as it structures the end itself.

Zeus's word is passed on by divine intermediaries to Priamos and Akhilleus. The challenge of encompassing the present authority of this word within a community is demonstrated in the exchange between Hekabe and Priamos that follows Priamos's announcement of his intention to ransom Hektor from Akhilleus himself.⁴⁷³ In the face of Hekabe's horror, Priamos at first simply insists on the presence of the god (Iris, but Priamos does not specify) and the effectiveness of the word:⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁶⁷ *Il.* 24.526. See esp. Lynn-George (1996), 6-9. Compare Macleod (ed.) (1982), on *Il.* 24.525-6: 'the gods, who in this book show their pity for men and demand that men pity each other, also will human suffering and never share it.' Contrast the relative weakness of N. J. Richardson (ed.) (1993), on 24.525-6: 'the point is ... that the gods' troubles do not strike deep'.

⁴⁶⁸ *Il.* 21.462-467.

⁴⁶⁹ Artemis's abuse: *Il.* 21.471-478.

⁴⁷⁰ *Il.* 21.516-517.

⁴⁷¹ See esp. Lowe (2000), 54-59, 103-128; but what his game-like model of narrative necessarily downplays is the extent to which rules and end-game themselves develop and structure each other as the narrative progresses.

⁴⁷² Compare Whitman (1958), 228: 'the view of the gods, who know the end, poignantly juxtaposed to the efforts of the mortals who do not'.

⁴⁷³ Priamos and Hekabe: *Il.* 24.191-227.

⁴⁷⁴ *Il.* 24.223-224.

νῦν δ', αὐτὸς γὰρ ἄκουσα θεοῦ καὶ ἐσέδρακον ἄντην,
εἶμι, καὶ οὐχ ἄλιον ἔπος ἔσσεται.

Zeus's word now is now Priamos's word as well.⁴⁷⁵ But in explicit deference to Hecuba's request and in implicit response to the ὄρνις κακός that Hecuba's earlier objections constitute, Priamos resorts to strategic ritualisation, and before setting out he makes a libation and prayer for a favourable omen—the only time in the *Iliad* an omen is prayed for.⁴⁷⁶ The unusual nature of this prayer reflects the unusual self-consciousness of Priamos's presentification of Zeus's word. Priamos's strategy aims to make present the communicative authority of Zeus's πυκινὸν ἔπος to the Trojan community at large. The flight of the omen-eagle through the city of Troy renders this presence apparent to all, and its unusual form, presenting a simile within an omen, demands an active response from the audience of the epic that assimilates us with the Trojans as interpreters of this presence, manifest in the form of an eagle, τελειότατον πετεηνῶν, the 'most perfect' or 'accomplishing' of birds.⁴⁷⁷

Still, it must be remembered that Priamos does no more here than extend the relation between himself and Zeus that Zeus has earlier initiated. The relational circle which Priamos extends here by his ritualised strategy to encompass the rest of Troy already animates Priamos himself. His words to Hekabe reflect this animative power: εἶμι, καὶ οὐχ ἄλιον ἔπος ἔσσεται. But later in *Iliad* 24, the stark difference between the gods and mortals in their respective abilities to generate this kind of effective presence is given a distressing emphasis in the funeral of Hektor. Lynn-George has rightly stressed 'the inconsolable echo' of Zeus's word when Andromakhe concludes her lament over the corpse of her dead husband Hektor with the absence of an 'intimate word', πυκινὸν ἔπος, from Hektor himself:⁴⁷⁸

οὐ γάρ μοι θνήσκων λεχέων ἐκ χεῖρας ὄρεξας,
οὐδέ τί μοι εἶπες πυκινὸν ἔπος, οὗ τέ κεν αἰεί
745 μεμνήμην νύκτας τε καὶ ἡμέματα δάκρυ χέουσα.

⁴⁷⁵ Compare Thetis's reply to Iris when she brings Zeus's summons, *Il.* 24.92: εἶμι μὲν, οὐδ' ἄλιον ἔπος ἔσσεται, ὅττι κεν εἴπηι.

⁴⁷⁶ Hecuba's request: *Il.* 24.286-298. Priamos's deference: 24.300-301. Ill omen: 24.219. Libation and prayer: 24.302-314. For the prayer for an omen, compare *Od.* 3.173, 20.97-104; note N. J. Richardson (ed.) (1993), on 24.292-298. Such requests have been seen, as by Stockinger (1959), 50, as evidence of a radically different religious mentality, but this is to disregard narrative context.

⁴⁷⁷ *Il.* 24.315. See esp. Ahnhalt (1995). For τελειότατον, compare *Il.* 8.247; see Stockinger (1959), 49 n. 91; Macleod (ed.) (1982), on 24.315; N. J. Richardson (ed.) (1993), on 24.314-316.

⁴⁷⁸ *Il.* 24.743-745. See Lynn-George (1988), 232-233. For this 'intimate' word, cf. Taplin (1992), 281: 'she has no intimate last memory'.

In the face of the exigencies of mortal fate, here expressed in the implicit opposition between dying in one's own bed and dying in extremis, Andromakhe contemplates the absence of a word which might have provided a consolatory presence in the form of continuous recollection: οὐ τέ κε αἰεὶ μεμνήμην. The index of the end returns as an absence at the end. This absence reasserts lack even in the midst of the actualisation of closure that the funeral narrative comprises: this 'fracture' points again to the basic difference between gods and mortals, which the structuring presence of Zeus's word at the end of the *Iliad* only partially offsets.⁴⁷⁹

In contrast with this affecting absence, the effectiveness of Zeus's word in *Iliad* 24 is more fully realised in the role that Hermes fulfills in escorting Priamos to Akhilleus. As Priamos sets out from the city, his family follow him out and lament his journey as if into a world of death: φίλοι δ' ἅμα πάντες ἔποντο | πόλλ' ὀλοφυρόμενοι ὥς εἰ θάνατόνδε κίοντα.⁴⁸⁰ This prospect prompts Zeus's instructions to Hermes:⁴⁸¹

Ἑρμεία, σοὶ γάρ τε μάλιστά γε φίλτατόν ἐστιν
 335 ἀνδρὶ ἑταιρίσσαι, καὶ τ' ἔκλυες ὦι κ' ἐθέλησθα,
 βάσκ' ἴθι καὶ Πρίαμον κοίλας ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν
 ὥς ἄγαγ', ὥς μήτ' ἄρ τις ἴδῃι μήτ' ἄρ τε νοήσῃ
 τῶν ἄλλων Δαναῶν, πρὶν Πηλεΐωνάδ' ἰκέσθαι.

In getting Priamos to Akhilleus unperceived by the Greeks at large, Hermes' power is several times essential, when he puts the Achaian guards to sleep and lifts the bar on the door to Akhilleus's compound.⁴⁸² Akhilleus later comments on the evident necessity of such divine assistance.⁴⁸³ In mediating Priamos's movement across these domain-boundaries, as has been observed, Hermes functions as a quasi-ψυχοπομπός, a role he fulfills in *Odyssey* 24; the journey across the plain of Troy, especially, takes on the features of a transitional zone

⁴⁷⁹ The specific, programmatic effect of this reappearance of Zeus's word is subsumed beneath a broader point about epic by Lynn-George (1988), 232-233: 'The iteration fractures the word of the father, opening the enduring, irreducible gap in and of language in the *epos* for which there will be no final word, only the fragile reverberations of language in the void'.

⁴⁸⁰ *Il.* 24.327-328. Elsewhere, the gods call Patroklos and Hektor θάνατόνδε: *Il.* 16.693, 22.297; for the comparison, see N. J. Richardson (ed.) (1993), on 24.327-328; for this as a portent, see Deichgräber (1972), 58-59.

⁴⁸¹ *Il.* 24.334-338. On the motivation, 'nur scheinbar neu', for Zeus sending Hermes as escort, itself already anticipated at 24.152-158=181-187, see Beck (1964), 192-193.

⁴⁸² Guards: *Il.* 24.445-447. Akhilleus's compound: 24.453-457. On this compound as a House of Hades, see Stanley (1993), 239; on its unexpected constructedness, see Lynn-George (1988), 236-237.

⁴⁸³ *Il.* 24.563-567, esp. 563-564: καὶ δέ σε γινώσκω, Πρίαμε, φρεσίν, οὐδέ με λήθεις, | ὅττι θεῶν τίς σ' ἦγε θοὰς ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν; cf. Ahnhalt (1995), 284-285.

into another world.⁴⁸⁴ The basic function of Hermes here is precisely to render what would otherwise have been a journey for Priamos to a literal death into another kind of journey altogether. Redfield even glosses this 'rite of departure and crossing over' as an inclusion in the divine world.⁴⁸⁵ Hermes is directly engaged in constructing the boundary conditions that enable Priamos and Akhilleus to meet and fulfill their parts in the execution of Zeus's structuring word.

Even though Priamos has earlier been told by Iris that Hermes will escort him, it is not until they reach the threshold of Akhilleus's hut that Hermes actually reveals himself to Priamos:⁴⁸⁶

- 460 ὦ γέρον, ἦτοι ἐγὼ θεὸς ἄμβροτος εἰλήλουθα,
 Ἑρμείας· σοὶ γάρ με πατήρ ἅμα πομπὸν ὅπασσεν.
 ἀλλ' ἦτοι μὲν ἐγὼ πάλιν εἶσομαι, οὐδ' Ἀχιλλῆος
 ὀφθαλμοὺς εἴσειμι· νεμεσσητὸν δέ κεν εἴη,
 ἀθάνατον θεὸν ὦδε βροτοὺς ἀγαπαζέμεν ἄντην.
 465 τύνη δ' εἰσελθὼν λαβὲ γούνατα Πηλεΐωνος.
 καὶ μιν ὑπὲρ πατρὸς καὶ μητέρος ἠὲ κόμοιο
 λίσσεο καὶ τέκεος, ἵνα οἱ σὺν θυμὸν ὀρίνηις.

With his first words Hermes reiterates the polarity between mortals and gods. He then declares that it would be *νεμεσσητόν* for him to go into the hut of Akhilleus alongside the suppliant Priamos, ἀθάνατον θεὸν ὦδε βροτοὺς ἀγαπαζέμεν ἄντην. What exactly is this that prompts the god to speak of a constraint upon his actions in terms of *νέμεσις*? Discussions of these lines have tended to focus on the meaning of ἀγαπαζέμεν and the potential for ambiguity in the syntax—who is greeting whom and what such 'greeting' here might entail—with the explanation that for Hermes openly to receive Akhilleus's hospitality here would be inappropriate.⁴⁸⁷ But more interesting is the reference of ὦδε, which may on the one hand point back to the prospective 'eyes of Akhilleus', but more specifically directs attention forward to Hermes' specific instructions to Priamos on ritualised supplication in the following lines. It is

⁴⁸⁴ *Od.* 24.1-4; cf. Heubeck (ed.) (1991), on 24.1-4. For Priamos's journey as *katabasis*, see the summary by Nethercut (1976), 5, but esp. Stanley (1993), 237-240. See also Whitman (1958), 217-218; Segal (1971), 66-67; Nagler (1974), 184-185; Redfield ([1975] 1994), 214; Frame (1978), 153-155; Mackie (1996), 290-291. Compare Seaford (1994), 166-176, on the liminality of death-like sorrow. For Hermes as mediator of boundaries, see Kahn (1978), esp. 178-179; Sourvinou-Inwood (1995), 103-106.

⁴⁸⁵ Redfield ([1975] 1994), 214: 'As Priam separates himself from his own world, he is, in a limited but real sense, included in the divine world.'

⁴⁸⁶ *Il.* 24.460-467. West (ed.) (1998-2000) deletes 24.466-467.

⁴⁸⁷ On the syntax and meaning, see N. J. Richardson (ed.) (1993), on 24.462-70; *LfrgE*, sv. ἀγαπάζω, ἀγαπάω; also Cairns (1993), 54; M. Scott (1980), 28.

precisely the supplication of Akhilleus that is the specific context for this prospective νέμεσις and not hospitality in some more general sense. Hermes' concerns are more specific: to play even a peripheral part here would interfere with the negotiation of claims in this supplication in an unconscionable way.⁴⁸⁸ Having come so far already in facilitating the recovery of Hektor's body, Hermes will not himself cross the threshold into the gaze of Akhilleus in this context of supplication. This is a crucial moment in the dynamic of divine presence and absence in *Iliad* 24.

The precise terms of Zeus's nomination of Hermes for this role as guide across the plain of Troy offer a curious gloss on Hermes' reticence to appear before Akhilleus:⁴⁸⁹

Ἑρμεία, σοὶ γάρ τε μάλιστά γε φίλτατόν ἐστιν
335 ἀνδρὶ ἑταιρίσσαι, καὶ τ' ἔκλυες ὦι κ' ἐθέλησθα,
 βάσκ' ἴθι

Zeus stresses precisely Hermes' propensity to associate with mortals however he wishes. Hermes' peculiar abilities as a mediator of boundaries finds expression here in relation to the hierarchical boundary between men and gods. The phrase ἀνδρὶ ἑταιρίσσαι is of particular interest. In the few other occurrences of this particular verb in early epic, it serves to underline a likeness between the two parties implicated, as in *Iliad* 13 when Deiphobos wonders whether to find a companion in the battle or go it alone, or in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* when the Graces are said to associate with the gods on terms of parity: αἳ τε θεοῖσι | πᾶσιν ἑταιρίζουσι καὶ ἀθάνατοι καλέονται.⁴⁹⁰ But here the two parties are a 'man' and a god, and to this extent Hermes' mediating role is given a gloss by Zeus that is highly specific to the situation, insofar as it foregrounds the question of how men and gods relate.⁴⁹¹ These are favourable conditions that underpin Hermes' crucial role in facilitating the ritualised supplication of Akhilleus by Priamos; but they emphasise all the more strongly the god's choice to reject the possibility of his stepping over the threshold with Priamos into the gaze of Akhilleus, and thus to be present ἄντην, 'face-to-face', while Priamos's supplication of Akhilleus takes place. At this key point, it is not appropriate even (or especially?) for Hermes, mediator *par excellence*, to be

⁴⁸⁸ See esp. Gould (1973), 93-94, on the close relationship of *hiketeia* and *xenia*, yet their crucial inversion of each other.

⁴⁸⁹ *Il.* 24.334-339.

⁴⁹⁰ Deiphobos: *Il.* 13.456. Graces: *HomHymnAph* 95-96.

⁴⁹¹ The association is not between ἄνθρωπος, 'human', and god, which might be to push a lexical boundary too far: for the categorical distinctions ἀνὴρ/ἄνθρωπος and θεός/ἄνθρωπος, see Bernadete (1963), 1-5.

present, despite the fact that the gods themselves are responsible for the conditions of possibility of this ritualised rapprochement between bereaved father and his son's vengeful killer. The exchange of ransom for body has been set in motion by Zeus's authoritative word; the two mortal participants are acting in explicit obedience to this word; Hermes' role as escort is the last of the conditions necessary for the meeting to take place. The possibility of supplication is explicitly dependent upon the active facilitating presence of the god as Priamos's guide, but nonetheless for the god to be present at the ritual itself would apparently be to step beyond bounds of due order.

What results when Priamos himself does take the step that the god will not take? The lengthy scene that ensues as Priamos secures Akhilleus's acceptance of the ransom and then eats with the Greek warrior is structured above all around two moments of face-to-face encounter.⁴⁹² Priamos first eludes the gaze of Akhilleus and his attendants, until he is in the very position of suppliance:⁴⁹³

τοὺς δ' ἔλαθ' εἰσελθὼν Πρίαμος μέγας, ἄγχι δ' ἄρα στάς
 χερσὶν Ἀχιλλῆος λάβε γούνατα καὶ κύσε χεῖρας
 δεινὰς ἀνδροφόνους, αἳ οἱ πολέας κτάνον υἷας.
 480 ὥς δ' ὅτ' ἂν ἄνδρ' ἄτη πυκινὴ λάβηι, ὅς τ' ἐνὶ πάτρῃ
 φῶτα κατακτείνας ἄλλων ἐξίκετο δῆμον,
 ἀνδρὸς ἐς ἀφνειοῦ, θάμβος δ' ἔχει εἰσορόωντας,
 ὥς Ἀχιλεὺς θάμβησεν ἰδὼν Πρίαμον θεοειδέα·
 θάμβησαν δὲ καὶ ἄλλοι, ἐς ἀλλήλους δὲ ἴδοντο.

Akhilleus' amazement and wonder at the sudden appearance of Πρίαμος μέγας is compared to the amazement and wonder provoked by the arrival of an exiled homicide.⁴⁹⁴ There is altogether something strange in his appearance; this strangeness is realised for the audience of the epic in what Lynn-George terms 'a sudden spiralling of associative relations' evoked by the simile of supplication in the midst of 'this spectacle of supplicating'.⁴⁹⁵ Akhilleus looks at Priamos and is amazed; the others with him are amazed and look at one another. Priamos is now Πρίαμος μέγας and Πρίαμον θεοειδέα.⁴⁹⁶ The strangeness of this encounter

⁴⁹² Compare Knox (1988), 5 n. 12: 'what moves Achilles throughout this scene is his own response to Priam's condition, and this is virtually immediate with Priam's appearance'.

⁴⁹³ *Il.* 24.477-484.

⁴⁹⁴ On the simile and the refractive challenges it poses, see esp. Heiden (1998); also Gould (1973), 96 and n. 111: 'the monstrous tension of the moment'; Lynn-George (1988), 239-240; N. J. Richardson (ed.) (1993), on 24.480-4; Seaford (1994), 70.

⁴⁹⁵ Lynn-George (1988), 239.

⁴⁹⁶ Πρίαμος μέγας occurs only here: see N. J. Richardson (ed.) (1993), on 24.477-9.

is staged a second time when, their transaction and meal now complete, Akhilleus and Priamos sit and wonder at each other:⁴⁹⁷

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντο,
 ἦτοι Δαρδανίδης Πρίαμος θαύμαζ' Ἀχιλῆα
 630 ὅσσοις ἔην οἶός τε· θεοῖσι γὰρ ἅντα ἐώικει·
 αὐτὰρ ὃ Δαρδανίδην Πρίαμον θαύμαζεν Ἀχιλλεύς
 εἰσορόων ὄψιν τ' ἀγαθὴν καὶ μῦθον ἀκούων.

In this moment the language of divinity and the shock of presence is further amplified. Here the mutuality of the encounter between Akhilleus and Priamos reaches a pitch where it come to embody a kind of reciprocal epiphany between two 'godlike' mortals.⁴⁹⁸ This is a fitting seal upon the significant action that Akhilleus and Priamos have just made complete. But more than this, it constitutes a negative of epiphany, where epiphany is understood to denote the dynamic of divine presence and absence and mortal perception. What Akhilleus and Priamos achieve is a state without flux or dynamic, a singular moment of intersubjectivity that fills an indefinite length of time with the simple fact of their encounter. In the midst of a sequence in which the *Iliad* places most emphasis on the radical difference between mortal and immortal versions of the scope for authoritative action, Akhilleus and Priamos appropriate from the gods the tropes of presence and share this presence instead between themselves. The absence of Hermes takes on a peculiar character when the encounter between warrior and king is understood in this way. His absence is the condition of this negatively epiphanic moment between mortals.

This moment is the focus of many readings of the *Iliad*, especially insofar as the encounter is understood to offer an affirmation of deep humanity amid death and despair.⁴⁹⁹ The mutual 'epiphany' of Akhilleus and Priam is a touchstone in readings of the legitimacy of the end of the *Iliad*, as a profound meditation on the nature of humanity, on the possibility of significant care, or even an affirmation of the fundamental importance of ritual in the history of civilisation.⁵⁰⁰ The play of divine presence and absence as a force of disruption is crucial here, in the interplay between the authority of the gods to end our narratives and the potential for mortals to generate specifically human

⁴⁹⁷ *Il.* 24.628-632.

⁴⁹⁸ Compare Stanley (1993), 243: 'Priam and Akhilleus part in an atmosphere of mutual respect that has revealed something of divinity in each'.

⁴⁹⁹ An elegant statement of the case remains the key achievement of Macleod (ed.) (1982).

⁵⁰⁰ Compare Seaford (1994), 71: 'Ritual has created a miracle, a unity of opposites'. In accordance with this emphasis, Seaford resolutely downplays the role that the gods' presence, as word and as escort, plays in making this ritualised moment possible.

meanings in and around these narrative-ends. There is a stark contrast between this Iliadic end and the dynamic of presence at the end of the *Odyssey*, which I discussed above. There Athene's reiterated presence marked the authority of the end in its unequal arbitration of claims and foreclosure of the narrative; here the presence of Hermes before and after the encounter between Akhilleus and Priamos serves to frame the strange mutuality of their presence in the absence of the god, a moment in which much of the legitimacy of the end of the *Iliad* is understood to lie. In each case, the play of divine presence and absence is a crucial part of the process of the end, but each in strikingly different ways. These endings offer different provocations to their audiences that arise out of the dynamics of presence as figured in interactions between mortals and gods. The juxtaposition of narrative end and the tropes of presence provides a particular opportunity for considering how the strategies of epic narrative relate to the strategies of narrativisation that I locate in the contexts of divine epiphany. In both cases, we are drawn into judgements about the legitimacy of the actions in which we participate as audiences and participants in these institutional monuments of epic speech.



In this chapter, I have tried to destabilise 'divine epiphany' as a category, to show how divine epiphany is constituted in a play of presence and absence in which perception and interpretation are always problems. If we can talk of a grammar of epiphany at all, this grammar is fractured. The long arm of Zeus is a potent example of this play of presence; for characters like Hektor the ensuing problems of perception and interpretation entail profound consequences. But I have also tried to show how this is a productive process. Divine epiphanies constitute moments of anti-structure around which cluster structuring responses. The resources of language to encompass anti-structure in figurative terms is vital to the communicative project of Homeric epic, and instances like the meteoric descent of Athene illustrate the participatory challenges that such figuration holds out for its (multiple) audiences. In this respect, epiphany is not constituted by ritual, for all that ritualisation is a frequent concomitant of the structuring responses that are evoked in and around the flux of divine presence and absence. Contingency is everywhere introduced by the gods' potential for being and acting; the narratives that are told and the rituals that are enacted are

all ways of making 'sense' of indeterminacy. Sense in such contexts encompasses both perception and significance, since what people perceive and how they perceive it are fundamentally implicated in how they constitute value in the world; the demands of sense, as understood in this way, are particularly pressing when it comes to confronting the anomic, the counterintuitive, the disruptive. The poetic exploration of such situations offers particular techniques for working out how this confrontation affects the world, as we might understand it to be. The poetic speech of epic narrative elucidates fundamental aspects of the formation of the present world in the heroic past for our appreciation and wonderment. In and around such narratives of divine presence and absence the most basic and the most complex aspects of human existence are reflected, constructed and explored.

3. Refractions of presence: a conclusion

A light is moving down the beach.
It wavers. Comes towards the fleet.
The hulls like upturned glasses made of jet.

Is it a god?

No details

Yet.

Christopher Logue, *War Music*.

My first chapter began with two stories. The first became a central instance in showing how epiphany in Homer is not itself a ritual event, but is made sense of through productive practices of narrativisation and ritualisation. The second was about a certain Sostrata and how an initial failure of ritual was overturned by the unexpected presence of Asklepios:¹

τάν τε παρουσίαν τὸν αὐτοῦ παρενεφάνιξε ὁ Ἀσκληπιὸς καὶ
ἵατρα ἐκέλετο ἀποπέμπειν εἰς Ἐπί[δα]υρον.]

Just how Asklepios 'indicated his presence' is not told. The vagueness of παρενεφάνιξε conceals much, even though it utilises the vocabulary of 'showing' often found in contexts of divine presence.² In the iconography of Asklepios, his

¹ IG IV², 1, 122.34-35; for the full text as given by LiDonnici (ed.) (1995), 104, see above, p. 5.

² See e.g. Pucci (1987), 110 n. 1, on φαίνεσθαι. For a focus on what is seen in healing experiences, compare IG IV², 1, 121.113-119: a double vision of snake and man, as external and internal views on the same event; and see also the relief dedicated by Archinos to Amphiaraos at Oropos (Athens Nat. Mus. 3369): see Herzog (1931), 87-89; Hausmann

presence is often envisaged as that of a dignified bearded man, not inconsistent with his initial description in Sostrata's story as a εὐπρεπὴς ἀνὴρ.³ But this vagueness is effectively obviated when Asklepios demands ritual acknowledgment of his presence. This demand integrates his extra-ritual performance within the more familiar sequence of ritual plea, healing, and thanks that the Epidaurian healing-stories offer as paradigm.⁴ In this way the initial, unsettling absence of the god from the centre of the ritual frame is overcome, in a movement from divine absence and the ineffectiveness of ritual action to decisive divine presence that prescribes recognition of the same ritual contexts that have apparently failed in the first instance. Asklepios's appearance subverts the conventional practices of this incubation-cult, even as the narrative as a whole functions as a kind of limit case of the effectiveness of the cult-practice at Epidauros. What this story shows emerging from the anti-logic of epiphany is a patently strategic imbrication of epiphany and ritual. This dynamic of structure and anti-structure is the central process that this thesis has set out to explore.

Some of the features of this story raise further questions. In particular, the interaction of bodies and gods in a narrative such as this—namely the surgical intervention of the god—speak of the implications of divine presence and absence for basic aspects of human bodily existence. In the previous chapter I discussed the effects of Apollo's embodied hand on Patroklos as an unmaking of Patroklos as a warrior by reducing him to a passive body that is entirely vulnerable in its battlefield 'nudity'.⁵ I also touched on the mutability of the body of πολύτροπος Odysseus, as a kind of limit-case of what is possible for humans by contrast with the mutable figuration of form that is the basic

(1948), 55-58, 169, no. 31, pl. 2; van Straten (1976), 4-5; Boardman (1995), 131-132, fig. 142; Depew (1997), 256-257; Osborne (1998), 211, fig. 127; note esp. van Straten (1981), 125: 'one might perhaps consider the possibility that Archinos had the eyes added to his relief, not in gratitude for the recovery of the power of sight (ὄρασις), but to render thanks for the vision (ὄραμα ...) he saw in his dream'.

³ *IG IV²*, 1, 122.30. For the iconography of Asklepios, see Holtzmann (1984), and within the Epidaurian iamata, compare *IG IV²*, 1, 121.118-119: νεανίσκον εὐπρεπῆ; 122.61-62: παῖς τις ὥραϊος; though in both cases it is possible that one of Asklepios's associates is present rather than the god himself.

⁴ For the didactic function of the Epidaurian healing-stories, see Dillon (1994), and cf. above, p. 14 n. 38. For background, see Herzog (1931), 46-64; Chaniotis (1988), 19-23; LiDonnici (1992), (ed.) (1995), 40-49. For ritual practice at Epidauros, see *IG IV²*, 1, 121.41-42, and *LSCGS* 22, a fragment of 4th cent. BCE cult regulations; note also *LSCGS* 11 (*IG II²*, 47) and *LSCG* 21 (*IG II²*, 4962): respectively, sacrifices to Asklepios in a festival context and prior to incubation, early 4th cent. BCE Athens; cf. Parker (1996), 181-182. For an early (comic) account of incubation (in the Asklepieion in Piraeus?), see Aristophanes' *Ploutos* with Sommerstein (ed.) (2001).

⁵ See above, pp. 77-79.

potential of gods.⁶ In a similar way, the 'long arm of Zeus' played a central role in opening up the problematic of divine presence and absence, and in underlining the consequences this problematic brings for figures like Hektor in 'sensing' what is really at stake in the presence and absence of Zeus, namely his own life. Examples like these underline the deep implications of the presence of gods in the world, not just for 'cosmic' order and other aspects of significance conceived in more or less intellectualist terms, but for the specific existential basis of people's dwelling in the world.

In Sostrata's case, the specificity of the narrative comes down to a couple of washbasins of [something] removed from her body by the god. Editors, in medical mode, restore 'creatures'.⁷ But such considerations should not obscure the direct importance of what is concealed in this textual break within the healing process that Sostrata undergoes: the removal of these putative 'creatures' from Sostrata's stomach constitutes, in her restoration to well-being, an objective correlate of the god's presence that Sostrata might then live out each day.⁸ From a state of despair (ἐμ παντὶ ἐοῦσα) Sostrata is made healthy by the god (ποίησας ὑγιῆ).⁹ What could be more immediate than this (potentially ongoing) bodily realisation of the efficacious presence of the god as manifest in the *absence* of illness? What better testimonial? The narrative does not extend beyond the point of Sostrata's healing and Asklepios's self-revelation and command, since for its readers the narrative itself constitutes the correlate of Sostrata's return to health, as encountered in the monumental context of the Epidaurian healing-stories. It is the narrative as experience-in-itself that opens up the effectiveness of Asklepios-cult to those who stop to read.

The history of the reception of the Epidaurian healing-narratives in modern scholarship is intriguing in this respect. Edelstein and Edelstein sketch a transition from a face-value acceptance of Asklepios-cures in 17th century Europe into more naturalistic frameworks of explanation, a process further

⁶ See above, pp. 114-116, 119-120.

⁷ IG IV², 1, 122.32-33: τὰ γ κοιλῖαν αὐτᾶς ἀνοσχίσας ἐξαιρεῖ πλῆθος ζῴων πολλῶν, [δύ]ε ποδανιπτῆρας. On ζῴων or ζῴων, see LiDonnici (ed.) (1995), 104 n. 14; cf. 20 n. 2 for the influence of Herzog's ideas about actual medical practice on his textual restoration; on this healing narrative, see Herzog (1931), 80: 'Parasiten im Lieb', with a discourse on Greek names for such.

⁸ IG IV², 1, 122.33-34: συνράψας δὲ τὰν γλαστέρα καὶ ποιήσας ὑγιῆ τὰν γυναῖκα τὰν τε παρουσίαν τὰν αὐτοῦ παρενεφάνιξε ὁ Ἀσκληπιός.

⁹ IG IV², 1, 122.27, 33. For the meaning of ἐμ παντὶ ἐοῦσα, contra the translation given by LiDonnici (ed.) (1995), 105 and n. 15, see LSJ s.v. πᾶς, D IV. Thanks to Pat Easterling for drawing this to my attention.

precipitated by the publication of the Epidaurian stelai in 1883.¹⁰ These frameworks alternate between seeing the priests of Asklepios as elaborate tricksters and as caring physicians operating under a religious cover; temple-sanctuaries become sanatoria, dreams become doctors' prescriptions, and so on:¹¹

Only a few scholars still dared to insist that from beginning to end the cures of Asclepius to the ancients had been a religious experience beyond all human understanding, and must be interpreted as such.

In this way, Sostrata's narrative can be subsumed beneath implicit or explicit histories of medicine that discredit the supernatural to uncover what really happened or read the supernatural as allegory to re-narrativise the intervention of the god in medical terms. Such histories read through cultural mystifications to uncover a biologically grounded substrate. But the only alternative that Edelstein and Edelstein offer is to privilege the cultural with a familiar appeal to 'religious experience', in this case glossed as 'beyond all human understanding'. None of these alternatives is sufficient. A better approach might lie in a medical anthropology which seeks to show 'how cultural meaning is intrinsic to embodied experience' and which thus provisionally overcomes the disabling dichotomy between biology and culture upon which such inadequate responses to the Epidaurian narratives rely.¹² The point is that the cultural formation of Sostrata's narrative and the bodily transformations she undergoes are not separate but one and the same. Readings of Sostrata's narrative must do justice to this specific grounding *in the body* of the dynamic of epiphanic anti-structure and ritual structuration as it is told in this instance, with all the strategic framing that this telling brings.

What this late fourth century inscriptional narrative from a highly ritualised context shows is that the problematic of epiphany that I have explored in Homer continues to play out in very different contexts of speech and action from those of the performance-reception of epic poetry. It is possible to multiply contexts in which the problematic of divine epiphany can be considered in terms of the dynamic of structure and anti-structure that I have

¹⁰ Edelstein and Edelstein (edd.) (1945), vol. 2, 142-144. For naturalism, see e.g. Herzog (1931).

¹¹ Edelstein and Edelstein (edd.) (1945), vol. 2, 144.

¹² For a specific example, see e.g. Csordas (1994b), esp. 270, 272-273, on a young Navajo man's struggle with brain cancer and the after-effects of treatment, esp. loss of linguistic ability; the man formulated a particular strategy in this struggle which 'originated in a direct encounter with the Navajo deities or Holy People, who inspired him with words of prayer'. The broader approach is exemplified in Csordas (1994a); for how the paradigm of embodiment might be further nuanced, see Ingold (2000), 170-171.

discussed in the Homeric poems. In my first chapter I focused on the narrative of Pausanias as a touchstone for uncovering the strategic effects of the appeal to 'experience' within Pausanias's exploration of a Greek cultural present through its past.¹³ In this exploration the Homeric enactment of epiphany in battle was an integral part of the presence of gods in Pausanias's Greek world. I also discussed how this evident continuity represented a substantial problem for those like Dietrich who would approach divine appearances in Homer in rationalising terms.¹⁴ The ongoing place in Greek culture of the Homeric poems in performance and reception underpins the relevance of Homer in considering the modalities of the gods in the Greek world: Homer remains a basic point of reference, a framing exploration.

Key testimony to the ongoing influence in religious matters of Homer and Greek epic in classical Athens is given in similar terms by Herodotos.¹⁵ The place of Homeric epic (in some form) within the Panathenaic festival offered a specific institutional context for these explorations of the presence and absence of the gods.¹⁶ Homer was at the heart of Athenian civic ritual and cultural life.¹⁷ Nonetheless, the development of new genres of narrative-performance, especially Athenian drama, presented new challenges.¹⁸ The enactment of the presence of gods in actual bodies upon the stage introduces a different performance medium: the embodiment of presence in the form of an actor brings new possibilities and new constraints, especially for encompassing moments of anti-structure on the stage.¹⁹ That exploration of the dynamic of anti-structure and structure within these constraints was still very possible is shown, for example, by the powerfully ideological transformation of the Furies from confusing seen/unseen presences at the end of the *Khoephoroi* into an orderly ritual procession and civic cult by the end of the *Eumenides*.²⁰ But other practical solutions are in evidence. One is the narrative mise-en-abyme offered by the messenger speech: a pertinent example is the appearance of Herakles

¹³ See above, pp. 11-15.

¹⁴ See above, pp. 23-25.

¹⁵ Hdt. 2.53. See also below, p. 47 n. 1.

¹⁶ See esp. Nagy (1999b); Haubold (2000), 149-152; see also above, pp. 336-37 n. 143, p. 39.

¹⁷ Compare e.g. Karanika (2001) for the intersection of epic and civic ritual.

¹⁸ For drama as narrative, albeit a 'more restricted dialect', see Lowe (2000), 164; also Gould (2001b), 333-334.

¹⁹ On the ramifications of this 'theatrical body', see Bassi (1998), 19-23, 99-143.

²⁰ See Goldhill (1984), 198-205, 271-279. See also the prologue of Soph. *Aias*, Falkner (1999) on the metatheatrical implications of divine presence.

and Hebe and the battlefield transformation of Iolaus in Euripides' *Herakleidae*.²¹ The use of this more strictly 'narrative' form to obviate problems of presence and transformation on the stage is directly comparable with how violence and death are brought onto the tragic stage through narrative and tableau. Another practical strategy was offered by the *deus ex machina*, a particular technology of presence which brings about a break of narrative in a way that we have already seen exemplified at the end of the *Odyssey*.²² Even if the dynamic of presence and ritual structuration takes on a particular stylised form in these contexts, the problem still remains how to make 'sense' of these moments of presence.²³ Much has been written agonising over the interruptions and ends that the gods impose on the narratives of such tragedies as Euripides' *Herakles* and *Orestes*.²⁴ The evident mismatch between divine and human frames is a particular crux that, depending on scholarly inclinations, is a problem of, or an opportunity for, narrative closure. But it is better not to choose between these alternatives: this dynamic of sense and senselessness is integral to tragedy's vision of the relations of gods and men, who seek in each other forms of validation that are forever fractured by the disjunct of their respective forms of existence.²⁵ Euripides' *Bakkhai* is emblematic of this fracture in its tragic realisation, but Homeric epic lies behind this tragic vision in multiple ways.²⁶ One strategy associated with the appearances of gods at the ends of Euripidean tragedies is particularly intriguing, namely the aetiological institution of specific ritual practice by the god.²⁷ At such moments the anti-structure of divine irruption into tragic narrative finds an objective, structuring correlate in the institution of ritual action: divine presence is re-narrativised in terms of ritual in a process familiar from my discussion of Athene's departure from the shore at Pylos.²⁸ But it is even more intriguing that the actuality of these aetiologies remains a pressing question for scholarly readers.²⁹ Here resurfaces the spectre of 'experience' as a means of understanding such narratives of divine presence in

²¹ Eur. *Herakleidae* 849-863. On these narrators, 'metalogue speakers', see esp. Gould (2001b), 325, 328-331; also de Jong (1991).

²² For this technology, see Hourmouziades (1965); Mastronarde (1990); Wiles (1997), esp. ch. 8.

²³ Compare Lowe (2000), 159: the focus of narrative shifts in tragedy away from action (outcomes are relatively controlled) towards the generation of meaning.

²⁴ See e.g. Dunn (1996), (1997).

²⁵ Compare Easterling (1993), 81: 'by juxtaposing human and divine perspectives the dramatist allows us to approach issues that defy logical analysis—and indeed elude critical interpretation.' See also Wildberg (1999-2000).

²⁶ On Homer and tragedy, see esp. Gould ([1983] 2001c).

²⁷ See e.g. Dunn (1996), 45-83.

²⁸ See above, pp. 138-146.

²⁹ See e.g. Parker (1997), 144-147; Scullion (1999-2000).

terms of a grounding in real religious practice. What is needed is a different understanding how such narratives participate in the world. I hope to have offered the beginnings of such an understanding in my exploration of the anti-logic of epiphany in the Homeric poems.

The close interplay of narrative, ritual and epiphany in such contexts points to the practical realisation of the claim that I made at the conclusion of my first chapter, namely that the relationship between 'historical' and 'imaginative' forms of religious representation is explainable as that between different instances of a more general process of articulating how the world might be. Such articulation extends *into* the world as speech and as action; that is, as practices through which to explore the potential and significance of divine presence and absence in the world. Such presence and absence may implicate every aspect of people's being-in-the-world. But my point here must not be mistaken: precisely what I am not claiming is that this variety of narratives all tell the *same* story.³⁰ Instead, as specific instances of a more general process of making 'sense' in all possible senses of the word, in which cognition and culture are inseparable in the continuum of human experience, what this approach to epiphany opens up is acknowledgment of the basic specificity and incommensurability of each fragmentary, partial, provisional narrative of divine presence and absence in the world.

At the start of this conclusion I quoted Christopher Logue's re-writing of the death of Patroklos and its aftermath:³¹

A light is moving down the beach.
It wavers. Comes towards the fleet.
The hulls like upturned glasses made of jet.

Is it a god?

No details

Yet.

Logue's narrative continues: this potential divine presence is in fact the processional return of the dead Patroklos. Thus Logue implicitly invites his audiences to consider the aftermath of Apollo's destructive intervention on the battlefield before Troy not in terms of the larger narrative of the *Iliad*, or the story of Troy that it rewrites, or the cosmic ramifications of this story for the

³⁰ See Prickett (2002), 257.

³¹ Logue ([1981-1994] 2001), 190-191.

present order of the world, but in the specific detail of the ritualised return of Patroklos's corpse into Akhilleus's care:

Now we can hear a drum.

And now we see it:

Six warriors with flaming wands,
Eight veteran bearers, and one prince,
Patroclus, dead, crossed axes on his chest,
Upon a bier.

Gold on the wrists that bear the prince aloft.
Tears on the cheeks of those who lead with wands.
Multiple injuries adorn the corpse.
And we, the army, genuflect in line.

This sudden moment of first person plural focalisation is crucial. We, as audiences of and participants in Logue's poetic speech, are invited—or, better, are compelled, given the ambivalent tone of 'we genuflect in line'—to participate in the significance objectified in the inert weight of Patroklos's corpse, which Akhilleus will tend as lovingly as he will later defile the corpse of Hektor.³² For concentrated in this corpse—a *mortal* body completely objectified—is all the specific, shattering weight of the gods' limitless being that is figured in Apollo's blow upon Patroklos's back:³³

His hand came from the east,
And in his wrist lay all eternity,
And every atom of his mythic weight
Was poised beneath his fist and bent left leg.

³² Compare Logue ([1981-1994] 2001), 158, where such focalisation is used in expressing the resistance of the army as they fight over the body of Sarpedon: 'We fight when the sun rises; when it sets we count the dead. | What has the beauty of Helen to do with us?' This plural, 'experiencing' focalisation is distinct from Logue's deployment of Homeric apostrophe, as e.g. Logue ([1981-1994] 2001), 159, 161-164; cf. above, p. 78 n. 128.

³³ Logue ([1981-1994] 2001), 164.

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The following abbreviations are used in the bibliography:

BICS	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies</i>
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
HSCP	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
PCPS	<i>Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society</i>
RE	Wissowa, G. et al. (edd.) (1894-), <i>Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , Stuttgart and Munich.
TAPA	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>

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